

WOMEN AT RISK Make sure your insurance takes care of you



THE ULTIMATE TRIP To the Alps and back in



MODEL BOSS Diana wouldn't have been on my books





How symphony was resurrected. Page 16



KENDALL RETURNS Giving Everton the scoring touch



£2m price tag sets a record for a British painting. Page 3

presence grew even larger with

the arrival in the Gulf of a third

aircraft-carrier and the order by

President Clinton for ships

carrying 2,000 Marines to move

into the area.

Clinton defiant as accusations pour in

President Clinton defiantly faced new allegations about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky yesterday, denying several days after testifying hat he had asked his secretary According to the New York

quite overwhelmed the visit by Tony Blair to Washington. Asked at a White House news conference-conducted jointly with Mr Blair - at what point he might just get up and walk away, Mr Clinton said: "Never ... I would never walk away from the peothey've placed in me."

said: "I'm just going to keep showing up for work. I'm going to do what I was hired to do." Obliquely admitting that the allegations had hurt him, he said: ing in public life today, has been graised. But to give in to that would be to give in to everything that I have fought against."

Mr Clinton repeated his denial that there was an improper relationship with Monica Lewin- to say, but did not deny that a sky, then a 21-year-old White House trainee, but refused to discuss a spate of new disclosures, saying that all legal proceedings were subject to a confidentiality order and he was intent on complying with it, whether others did or not. He was said to be cretly taped her conversations considering legal action against the independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, for the leaks.

legality was interpreted by some conversations on innumerable itary force will follow. US analysts as evidence that the occasions that she has had a sexlatest disclosures - details of ual relationship with President act, and we are," the President which were published in yesterday's newspapers - were pocentially very damaging. He is heard "at least three tapes conalleged not only to have had an affair with Ms Lewinsky, but to have told her, and perhaps others, to lie about it.

The New York Times, relying on what it said were "lawyer" sources, said there was a signifgiant discrepancy between sworn = stimony given by Mr Clinton about his relationship with Ms Lewinsky and subsequent information given by his person- accept the terms set by Mr al secretary, Betty Currie.

few members of the White House staff to emerge from giving evidence this week not to have told reporters afterwards that she was "unaware of any her lawyer an immunity deal was improper relationship between the President and Ms Lewinsky or anyone else for that matter". on Tuesday. The prosecutor,

Mrs Currie, described as a devout Christian, was said to ing on a face-to face interview have been "in turmoil" about with her before granting imher evidence and went absent munity and had given her until from her White House job for midday yesterday to decide.

By Mary Dejevsky in Washington

Times, Mr Clinton had effec-Questions about the affair tively coached her in what she should tell the inquiry, calling her into the office on a Sunday to recount in detail his own testimony and encourage her to repeat it. At one point, the newspaper reports, he told her:

"We were never alone, right?" Mrs Currie, however, seems ple of this country and the trust to have proved less biddable than Mr Clinton may have Warming to his theme, he hoped. She reportedly told the inquiry that the two were sometimes alone, though they were always in earshot. She also said to have handed to investigators a box containing a dress, a The pain threshold ... of be- brooch, hatpin and other small articles said to be gifts from Mr Clinton to Ms Lewinsky.

Yesterday, both Mrs Currie's lawyer and the White House denied that Mr Clinton had "coached" his secretary in what meeting took place or the exis-

Another damaging leak was printed in the Washington Post. signed by Linda Tripp, the coluary, she says that Ms Lewin- over Iraq yesterday, insisting Clinton since November 15. changed".

The date mentioned is when the US government was virtually shut down because of a budget disagreement and the White House was staffed to a large extent by trainee volunteers.

In the meantime, Ms Lewinsky was pondering whether to Starr for obtaining immunity Mrs Currie was one of the from prosecution. She needs such immunity to avoid a perjury charge if she goes back on her sworn denial of an affair with Mr Clinton. According to agreed and signed before she left Washington for California however, was reportedly insist-

Thousands killed in Afghan quake

A powerful earthquake joited Afghanistan's remote northcast this week, killing as many as 4,000 people, an Afghan official said yesterday in the first casualty reports to emerge.

The quake hit the city of Rustaq, 150 miles north of the capital, Kabul, destroying 15,000 homes, according to -Sher Mohammed, a spokesman for the military alliance that controks the area.

Aftershocks rocked the mountainous area for hours riterwards, he said, speaking by satellite telephone. The US Geological Survey in Golden, Colorado; put the magnitude of Wednesday's quake at 6.1 on the Richter Scale. Mr Mohammed said the landslides at the epigrentre caused much of the ciestruction.

News of the devastation, in the isolated northern province Cross. of Tahkar, which borders Tajik-



istan, reached Kabul only yesterday, and details remained difficult to confirm.

The ousted Afghan President, Burhanuddin Rabbani, who leads the anti-Taliban alliance that controls the area affected by the quake, has appealed for urgent help from the United Nations and the Red.

This was the text of an affidavit, league of Ms Lewinsky who sewith the former trainee. In this Bill Clinton and Tony Blair put short statement, dated 21 Jan- on a strong common front Mr Clinton's concern for sky revealed to me in detailed that if diplomacy fails then mil-1995". She said she had also taining the President's voice and had seen "gifts they ex-

Woman goes to war on Lord Chancellor's 'old boys' network'

By Mary Dejevsky.in

Washington

France have their doubts about

Britain is sending eight Tor-

and reconnaissance aircraft,"

Mr Blair said, "It will take place

over the next few days."

nado aircraft to Kuwait in

they are needed.

Mr Blair confirmed that

"These are ground-attack

air strikes.

Star-spangled dinner: Bill Clinton and Tony Blair thanking Elton John and Stevie Wonder after their performance at the White House banquet

Though the move is really a

gesture, it has high political sig-

nificance at a time when the

US is getting flak from its

partners over its bellicose

two leaders had discussed Irao

the peace process in the Mid-

dle East, Bosnia, the global

economy, the Asian financial

crisis and the importance for

stance on the Gulf.

US and Britain insist on force against Iraq

By Anthony Bevins Political Editor

"We must be prepared to

said. "We have to prepare in

case diplomacy cannot work,"

They were definitely singing

from the same hymn sheet,

even if Russia, China and

said the Prime Minister.

The Lord Chancellor, the country's leading judicial official, is being taken to an industrial tribunal in an embarrassingly open-and-shut case of operating an illegal old boys' network. As Lord Irvine of Lairg was

himself appointed Lord Chancellor as a leading member of Tony Blair's old boys' network, the charge that he appointed an old friend, Garry Hart, as his adviser in the Lord Chancellor's Department came as no sur-

But the challenge goes further than that. If the Lord Chancellor were to lose the case, due later this year, the Government would in future be prevented from employing its friends and allies in key roles and would be required to advertise all vacancies.

It could also face paying substantial compensation to Jane Coker, the solicitor bringing the action.

The proceedings have been ssned against the department, complaining that the manner of the appointment was discriminatory under the terms of Labour's Sex Discrimination

Ms Coker, a senior solicitor with a North London practice, said it was a great pity Labour had talked about equal opportunities in Opposition and not practised it in office.

A statement by Jane Deighton, the solicitor repre-- AP, Kabul senting Ms Coker, said: "The



Jane Coker: Claims proper selection for the position did Photograph: Ben Gurr/INS not take place

proceedings allege that Mr Hart, senior partner of a City firm of solicitors and a middleaged white man, was appointed because he was known to the Lord Chancellor. Advertising and proper selection did not take place.

"The applicant to the Industrial Tribunal, Jane Coker, did not know about the job and therefore could not apply.

proceedings are a fundamental challenge to the practice new governments have of employing their friends and allies once elected. This practice, the proceedings claim, is illegal."

The chances of the Lord Chancellor surviving his latest scrape look remote. His department has not even bothered to reply to the legal interrogation that has been sent in un-'She would have been a der the terms of the Sex he appointed the best person formidable candidate ... The Discrimination Act; suggest- for the job."

ing it has no reply to offer. Ms Deighton said: "It is very simple nowadays: if your associates are primarily men, then it is going to discriminate against women, if you choose your adviser from amongst your associates.'

nership" between the two

The two leaders and their

wives were spending last night

tial retreat in Maryland's

Catoctin mountains. In private,

British officials said, the two

leaders discussed the logistics

There were signs of frus-

of an Iraqi attack.

The Prime Minister said the at Camp David, the presiden- plained about the UN.

countries.

The Prime Minister cited a tration within the Clinton ad-

pushing and pulling. Defense

Secretary William Cohen, ap-

pearing at a Congressional

hearing on Thursday, com-

United Nations were to stand

behind its own resolutions ...

that would be the best way to

contain him," Mr Cohen said.

The already large American

we think, trankiv, ii the

"great comradeship and part- ministration over the political

The same would apply in terms of racial discrimination, if all of Lord Irvine's associates were white. As for the Westminster and Whitehall charge that Mr Blair is also guilty of similar discrimination, having made many appointments from among "Tone's crones", Ms Deighton said: "It is particularly wrong to have a clique of old associates of the Prime Minister running the country; that is anti-democratic. Lord Irvine was Tony Blair's tutor; Charlie Falconer, the Solicitor-General, is an old friend of Tony Blair's.

"What democracy demands is that people best suited to the jobs are appointed to them, not people who happen to be known to those in power. And that is also what the law reouires."

Ms Coker added: "No, this is not sour grapes. What it is saying is that the job of special adviser to the Lord Chancellor, at a time when the Lord Chancellor is looking very closely at the way in which the law is accessible to people from less privileged backgrounds, and the poor, is an important position and I would have expected him to seek to ensure that



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MONDAY

INTERVIEW

Deborah Ross goes shopping with Manolo Blahnik

IN THE EYE

How to win an Oscar: The ad campaign, the bribes, the T-shirt



What Juliette Binoche, Ralph Fiennes, Diana Rigg and Liam Neeson have in common

Why Fitz is no Cracker Media +

Harman axes £65m cuts for jobless

A proposal to cut £65m off the benefits of 1.9 million of the most deprived was dropped yesterday. Anthony Bevins, Political Editor, says some cabinet ministers were as surprised by the plan as Labour MPs.

The Independent has been reliably informed that if the Cabinet had known in advance of the controversial cut in lone parents' benefit, it would have stopped it. By the time ministers had been alerted to its full impact, it was too late to retreat.

That was not the case with changes proposed in the Jobseeker's Allowance that would extend the "waiting time", blocking claims from the unemployed for seven days, rather than the present three.

Whitehall alarm bells started ringing last month when Harriet Harman, Secretary of State for Social Security, quietly published a highly critical report from the Social Security Advisory Committee, urging her not to go ahead with the Jobseeker's Allowance (Amendment) Regulations, inherited from the Conservatives.

The committee warned of the dire impact of the cuts on some of the poorest people but Ms Harman was resolute, saying: "Social security is not designed to provide cover for moving between jobs or brief spells of unemployment." David Rendel, the Liberal Democrat spokesman, tabled an objection.

Curiously, however, because the idea had been initiated by the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrat objection was joined by William Hague and other leading Tories, who argued that the measure was no longer necessary.
It is understood that No 10

reached the same conclusion that Ms Harman was wrong and the only question then was how to drop the idea without the loss of too much face for Ms

The fact that Labour had performed one U-turn by adopting a proposal it had opposed when in opposition did not weaken the determination of the Prime Minister's office to perform yet another U-turn, and drop the idea completely:

That determination was underlined by the fact that more than 25 Labour MPs had joined the veteran backbench campaigner Audrey Wise, who led the lone parents benefit revolt, in signing a Commons motion of protest and dissent.

Yesterday - very quietly - a junior minister in Ms Harman's Department, Keith Bradley, was given the task of gently dropping the measure, while pretending not to. In a written Commons reply,

he told Chris Pond, the Labour MP for Gravesham and former director of the Low Pay Unit: "In the Welfare State review which the Prime Minister has set up, the Government will be considering the issue of waiting days in Jobseeker's Allowance.

"As it is part of the review, the Government will not therefore be proceeding with the previous proposal to extend the number of waiting days in Jobseeker's Allowance."

Mr Rendel called the move a "dramatic U-turn".



Just the ticket: Working for the lottery has paid off for stars and PR men alike

Camelot in quest for PR white knight

Lottery operator Camelot, facing demands that it should lose its licence, is seeking a media guru. Kim Sengupta reports.

The last person to hold the post of communications director at Camelot, David Rigg, walked off with £733,000 for three years' work, and scathing attacks for his "fat cat" earnings. Now the company is looking for a replacement, who will be offered a basic salary of around £100,060.

A leading firm of City headhuniers, Odgers International, has been instructed to seek out the person to rescue the battered image of Camelot. Odgers is believed to have already interviewed a number of candidates.

The person chosen has a hard job ahead of them. The Camelot consortium, which includes the controversial US company GTech, has faced criticism since it was award. ed the licence by the former regulator, Peter Davis, in 1994. This has become particularly trenchant since Virgin boss Richard Branson won his libel case against former Camelot director Guy Snowden, forcing Peter Davis to resign. Now there calls by MPs that Camelot should be divested of its licence, and the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, is said to be examining the contract.

Mr Branson won £100,000 from Mr. Snowden after a jury agreed that the Glech director had tried to bribe him. Aiter the case, it emerged that Mr Rigg had discussed the bribery allegation in a memo with managing director Tim Holley.

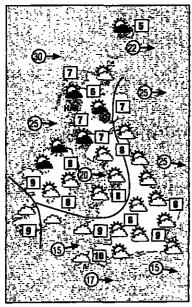
Mr Rigg had already come under the spotlight as one of 10 Camelot directors who had pocketed a £2.3m windfall, made up of pay hikes and performance bonuses, in May last year. He was the biggest winner as his pay packet rose from £175,000 to £333,000. Mr Smith was said to be outraged by the

bonanza, and it led to a confrontation between the Government and Camelot which only ended when the minister caved in andallowed the directors to keep the bonuses. A spokeswoman for Camelot said: "We

are just seeing who is around."

WEATHER

The British Isles, noon today



..17.03

.17.01

....17.03

Newcastle16.56 to 7.44

General summary and outlook Once any early rain has cleared the south-east of England, it will be a bright and fresh day in most these being in western Scotland, Northern Ireland and the north-west of England, and some will be wintry on the Scottish mountains. Wales and western parts of England will see fewer showers, but it will become rather cloudy at times. The best of the sunshine will be across East Anglia and eastern England where it will remain dry, it will a breezy day. especially in the north-west. Sunday will see a return to cloudy, mild and damp

conditions, especially in the north and west where it will be windy with gales. Monday will remain mild with spells of rain in the north-west, but the south-east will be generally dry with a little sunshine at times. Tuesday will see little change with further rain in the north-west but elsewhere it will be mainly dry and mild with the best of the sunshine in eastern parts.

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Atlantic chart, noon today

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High tides

AA Roadwatch

London, At between Mill Hill Circus and tions. Úntil May 31. London A3211 Blackfriars Underp Contraftow. Until April 15. works and contraflow. Until 1999. Kent M2 J5-7. Bridge maintenance & restrictions. Until March 9. Bristol, M5 J18j-19. Major roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge, Until Jan 99. West Yorks, M1 J43-42 Stourton to Loft-

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Out and about with AA Road-watch call 0336 401 for the latest local and national traffic news Source. The Automo-bile Association, Calls charged at 39p per man (cheap rate) 49p per min (all other lornes) inc

Sun and moon

Full Moon: February 11

07.30 17.01

Scargill's daughter weds ex-pit boss

The daughter of Mational Union of Mineworkers president Arthur Scargill is to marry the man who helped close ago when she was involved in down the last pit in the NUM's the Women Against Pit Clowas disclosed yesterday.

Dr Margaret Scargill has announced her plans to marry former Grimethorpe Colliery

under-manager James Logan. Mr Logan, 42, is now business manager at the Ashville Medical Centre, in Barnsley,

along a corridor with a tube of glue in her hands. The couple plan to marry latwhere Dr Scargill works as a GP. er this year.

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20-23

He told yesterday how he

first met his future mother-in-

law, Anne Scargill, five years

colliery to find he could not get

into his office because someone

had super-glued the door shut. He studied security videotapes

and saw Mrs Scargill sneaking

جر جيوا يا



Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997.



From March 29th this year, Singapore Airlines will fly three times a day, instead of twice, direct from London to Singapore every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. In addition, we will also fly direct from

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The curious tale of 'Mr Clean', the faith-healer and the divorce case

The image of football's Mr Clean has crumbled. Four months ago, Glenn Hoddle was the Godfearing England coach and family man. Today, he is starring in the strange tale of the soccer boss, the faith healer and the mistress. Louise Jury reports.

If anything goes to show that you can never really know some people, Glenn Hoddle is the living proof. For yesterday he was plunged into the middle of a divorce

Millionaire property developer Jeffrey Shean named Hoddle as co-respondent in his divorce petition after the England coach allegedly spent the night with Mr Shean's wife, Vanessa. Hoddle issued absolute denials. But that seemed barely the point. To anyone who has followed the 24-year record of the born-again Christian, the very thought of Hoddle committing adultery



Family man: Glenn Hoddle yesterday,

would once have been as unthinkable as the Pope bearing twins.

Until last October, when he stunned his colleagues and fans by leaving Anne, his wife of 18 years, and moving into the home of a faith-healer. Hoddle was renowned as squeaky-clean. The devoted father of three children, Zoe, 14, Zara, 11, and Jamie, 5, he would be seen playing with them in the garden of their home in Ascot, Berkshire, and was a regular attender at his local United Reform Church. Shredded Wheat even chose the family as the epitome of brightsmiling goodness for an advertisement.

While Paul Gascoigne and others of his footballing compatriots revelled in drinking and womanising, 40-year-old Hoddle simply knuckled down to the job.

A quiet, distant man - some said cold he appeared 53 times for England after first being capped in 1979. He led Swindon Town into the Premiership, then, as

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manager of Chelsca took the club to its first FA Cup final in 24 years.

When, as widely rumoured, he was offered the England job just after Euro 96, Chelsea offered £1.4m to keep him. But, personally recommended to the Football Association by Terry Venables, he accepted the

post. And things appeared to be going fine. The side completed a successful World Cup qualifying campaign with a 0-0 draw against Italy in Rome at the beginning of October. When trouble broke out among the crowds, he appeared at the door of the family home to comment on the police behaviour towards the fans,

Then just days later, the bombshell dropped. In a statement issued through the Football Association, Hoddle said he was leaving his wife, a teacher and his childhood sweetheart.

"The England coach Glenn Hoddle wishes it to be known that, with great sadness, he has separated from his wife, Anne. This is a personal and private matter. It is unconnected to his football responsibilities. Nobody else is involved."

For the first time, it became clear why Mrs Hoddle, also 40, had refused to pose for photographs with her husband after the England-Italy trouble.

Shredded Wheat withdrew their advert as "inappropriate". Neighbours expressed shock, even England team-mates seemed surprised. But nowhere near as surprised as when Hoddle then moved into the home of Eileen Drewery, a 57-year-old grandmother, married to a bricklayer called Phil.

Admittedly, any suggestion of romance was quickly scotched. Hoddle had got to know Mrs Drewery when he had dated her daughter, Michelle, as a teenager. Although that relationship petered out, he had kept in touch with the family, not least because of Mrs Drewery's powers of healing.

For years, any injury Hoddle received has been subjected to the laying on of her hands, and he brought a succession of other injured players to her door in Wokingham, Berkshire.

With the trauma of separation now engulfing him, Mrs Drewery protected Hoddle as if he were a son. "I'm just going to cook his dinner," she said. "He does not want to say anything and when he does it will be through the Football Association. He just wants to do his job and be left alone."

It was not to be. The rumours persisted, and the name of Vanessa Shean came to public attention last month.

The Sheans and Hoddles had met at the Royal Berkshire Racquets and Health Club, and Jeffrey Shean had been delighted with his friendship with a footballer he had so admired. But then his wife was said to have left him. Newspapers claimed that she was seeing Hoddle and yesterday solicitors provided ammunition for the stories.

Margaret Bennett, for Mr Shean, said: We can confirm that yesterday we issued a divorce petition on the grounds of adultery on behalf of Jeffrey Shean against his wife, Vanessa, and that this petition names Glenn Hoddle as co-respondent."

Hoddle would not comment. Appearing at the door of Mrs Drewery's home in Wokingham, dressed in pink shirt and black trousers, he said that a statement would be

issued later. It denied the claims. At the five-bedroom home she used to share with Mr Clean in Ascot, Mrs Hoddle was asked what she thought. "It's all very sad," she said. Football turned out to be a dirty game after all.



The big picture: Lucien Freud's Large Interior WII (after Watteau) on view at Sotheby's prior to its sale in New York on 14 May Photograph: Andrew Buurman

£2m tag puts Lucien Freud into the record books

A masterpiece by Lucien Freud is being offered at auction of around £2m, making it the most expensive painting by a British artist alive today.

The work, Large Interior, WII (After Watteau), painted between 1981 and 1983, is a monumental work inspired by Antoine Watteau's celebrated 18th-century painting Pierrot Content. David Lister, Arts News Editor, reports.

It will be offered for sale in New York in May by Sotheby's for an estimated price

The current auction record price for a work by Freud is £892,500 (\$1.4m) for a portrait sold last year. But Sotheby's experts claim that Large Interior is the artist's masterpiece and will fetch more than double that sum.

It will still not beat the record sum paid for a work by a living British artist,

Triptych May-June in 1989, when Bacon was still alive.

by's in London yesterday. It comes from artist's own words, "intensity is the unthe collection of James Kirkman. Freud's — decurrent" and where the sitter's dealer from 1972-1992, who acquired it directly from the artist.

es by 78 inches, is a highly charged psy-The painting went on view at Sothe- chological group portrait in which, in the er meets that of the viewer.

The painting depicts four seated fig-Elena Geuna, the head of Sotheby's ures, one of which is the artist's daughter, contemporary art department, said: "The fashion designer Bella Freud, playing the appearance at auction of one of the most mandolin. Her audience is shown sitting important British paintings of the last 50 huddled together in a tight group listen-

which is 5.7m dollars for Francis Bacon's years is an event of great significance.". ing to the performance with faraway ex-Large Interior, which measures 73 inch-pressions on their faces, while a fifth figure, that of a small girl, is seen lying on the floor beside them.

In Large Interior, Freud transforms into a sombre yet atmospheric scene of thoughtfulness and introspection.

Freud's idea of portraiture came from dissatisfaction with portraits that resembled people. He once said: "I would wish my portraits to be of people, not like them. Not having the look of the sitter, being them. As far as I am concerned the paint is the person."

The new record, if it is achieved, will add to the Freud mystique. The artist, grandson of Sigmund Freud and brother of Sir Clement, is notoriously enigmatic and guards his privacy jealously.

Last year an unofficial biographer. Nigel Jones, abandoned a biography billed in a publisher's catalogue as investigating the "darker, hidden side" of the

His publisher, Richard Cohen, said at the time: "There is something Nigel is afraid of and I would not want to expose

BEST OF BRITISH AND WHAT THEY COST

1. David Hockney: Grand Procession of Dignitaries in the semi Egyptian Style — £1,204,819 in 1989

2. Lucien Freud: John Deakin - £810,000

3. Frank Auerbach: Mornington Crescent 8. Leon Kossoff: Chikkren's Swirinming Pool

£357.143 in 1990

4. Malcolm Morley: Portrait of Vermeer -£318,436 in 1992

Top prices paid for British contemporary 5. Howard Hodgkin: In the Bay of Naples - £289,474 in 1996 6. Leonora Carrington:

- Les Distractions de Dagobert. £275,641

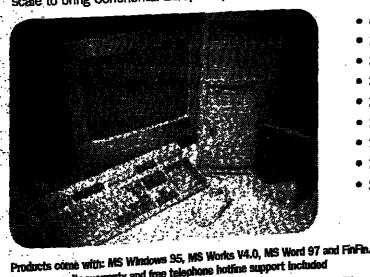
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- £190,000 in 1992

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Bhuttos take action over drug traffic allegations

The husband of Benazir Bhut- is provided to enable Mr Pakistan, won permission yesterday to launch legal prodrug-trafficking.

In a campaign spearheaded by Ms Bhutto, Asif Ali Zardari ator, was taken into custody took action after the British gov-shortly after Ms Bhutto was reernment agreed to help the present Pakistani government's ident in November 1996. current investigations.

Mr Zardari is in custody in his homeland.

Yesterday, a judge at the High Court in London gave him leave to seek a declaration that



Asif Ali Zardari: In custody

he is entitled to access to the letter of request from Pakistan that triggered the investigation which he says is politically motivated - or at least to know the substance of its contents.

But Mr Justice Latham refused to allow Mr Zardari's Pakistan. lawyers to apply for a ruling that the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, acted unfairly or irrationally in agreeing to the formal request and in nominating

a court to receive evidence. QC, appearing for Mr Zardari, told the judge: "In this case ing Mr Zardari's full judicial there is a serious risk of injustice unless sufficient information March.

to, former prime minister of Zardari to enjoy effective safeguards in the English proceedings. This should not depend on ceedings at the High Court in the Pakistan government's wish-London after allegations of es but on basic principles of fairness."

Mr Zardari, a Pakistani seomoved from office by the pres-

He was charged in connection with the murder of Ms Bhutto's brother Murtaza, as well as alleged offences of corruption and evasion of customs duty.

His lawyers argued that the Home Secretary's decision to grant assistance was not based on those charges but on the Pakistani government's confirmation that he faced drug-related proceedings in his homeland.

Ms Bhutto and her husband believed the request was part of a wider politically motivated campaign being waged by the present Muslim League government against the Bhutto family and the Pakistan People's Party, whose leader was Ms

Lord Lester said Mr Zardari wanted access to the letter of request to enable his lawyers "to have a fair opportunity to crossexamine witnesses" supplying information to nominated magistrates at Bow Street court for eventual transmission back to

The judge agreed that there was "an arguable case". Mr Zardari's London-based lawyers, Goodman and Derrick. then indicated that they would ask the magistrates to continue Lord Lester of Herne Hill an existing order and keep police investigations on hold pendreview application, due on 11



Benazir Bhutto: Spearheaded campaign on behalf of her husband

Revealed: parking perks of Whitehall bureaucrats

Ministers plan to crack down on company car parks because they consider them an incentive for people to drive to work. So why, asked one influential Labour peer, do top civil servants get so many places to park in the capital? Randeep Ramesh, Transport Correspondent, examines the arguments.

There are nearly 2,500 parking spaces for civil servants in central London, according to figures obtained by Lord Berkeley, a former Labour transport spokesman. The peer yesterday questioned why so many spaces were needed at a time when motorists are being encouraged by ministers to switch to public transport.

"It is inconceivable that the Government has 2,500 essential car users in central London," said Lord Berkeley. "I believe that most just use their cars as a cheap and comfortable means of commuting, in isolation from the general public forced into crowded public transport." Lord Berkeley, chairman of the Rail Freight Group since 1996, has written to Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, who himself took a well-publicised walk to work this week, urging him to tackle the issue.

"Mr Prescott recently called for ministers to use public transport. I have written on behalf of big business in London. Mr to him suggesting that he addresses the much larger problem of private car park-

ing for officials in the same way, so that all but a few essential users forsake their cars, comply with the Government's own transport policy and set an example to the rest of the population." Experts say the Government accounts for less than 5 per cent of the total of "private non-residential car parking spaces" in central London.

The Treasury had most spaces - 429 for staff and ministers. But there were 334 at the Lord Chancellor's Office and 293 at the Social Security Department and 288 at the Health Department, Perhaps the most extravagant department is the Lord Chancellor's. The 922 staff of Lord Irvine of Lairg's office have 343 spaces.

Transport officials will wince at the constant attacks from environmentalists who say they should use their cars less. In fact, the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions has only 209 parking spaces - a small number for a department that employs 3,000 civil servants.

But high-profile transport figures - including Mr Prescott, who has a chauffeurdriven Jaguar, and rail regulator John Swift, who is given a car - say that the demands of a job requires a car.

However, some experts say that on average civil servants have less car parking spaces than big business. "Only 8 per cent of civil servants travel into work by car into central London - that is half the average rate," said Irving Yass, transport director for London First - a group which lobbies Yass added there were 60,000 "private nonresidential parking spaces" in London.

Falmouth coastguard saves Suez sailors after world ignores distress call

Four Ukrainian sailors trapped in the Suez canal on an abandoned ship were desperate for help. But only coastguards in Falmouth, Cornwall, responded to the 2,900-ton Prosper when it signalled for help last week.

The coastguards persuaded Immarsat, which runs international satellite communications, to open a free link with the vessel. And they discovered the sailors had been stuck there for six months with no supplies and no money to enable their return to the Ukraine.

One of the men explained they had been abandoned by the ship's master after the to fend for themselves," he said. "We are ship was arrested over \$1m debts allegedly owed to a Greek bank. Although they were

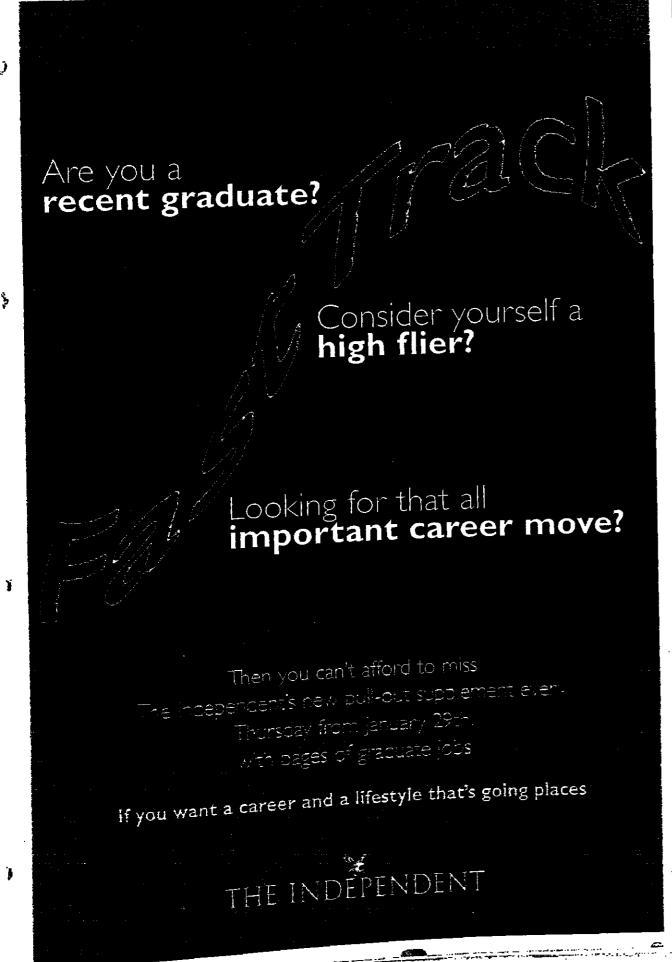
The distress signal went out across the world. not under arrest, they feared they would lose any chance of wages that were owed them if they left the boat.

Henry Purbrick, from the Falmouth coastguard, said they alerted the owner's lawyer in Greece. But on Thursday they received further cries for help and called for international action to help the men.

"They sounded even more desperate. Can you imagine being in Egypt and no way of getting home?" Mr Purbrick said.

Mykola Kravchenko, of the Ukrainian embassy in London, said he was saddened by the case but it was not rare. "They have a country in crisis."

— Louise Jury























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Air-crash hero in fight for trauma damages

The first man to arrive at the scene of the British Midland air crash at Kegworth in 1989 went to court yesterday to seek damages for the stress he has suffered in the aftermath.

A Royal Marine yesterday described how he spent more than three hours helping to rescue the injured and dying from the crash wreckage alongside the M1 in Leicestershire.

Graham Pearson, 39, who is battling for compensation from British Midland over the acute post-traumatic stress disorder

(PTSD) he suffered in the wake of the catastrophe, told the court how he emerged covered in blood and later had to undergo an HIV test.

long ago admitted "primary liability" for the January 1989 accident in which 47 people died, it is disputing the amount of damages due to Mr Turnbull, a father of four, from Goole, Humberside. His counsel, Paul Rose, said his claim for £ 57,000 damages was "modestly pitched", but British Midland

insists he is only due £200. Mr Pearson, who won an award for bravery from the Royal Humane Society for his efforts, said he and his wife were driving home along the M1 af-

Although British Midland

ter visiting relatives in Kent when they saw a "flash in the sky" and quickly came upon debris. He got out of the car to see an injured passenger staggering towards him and, despite the risk of an explosion from leaking fuel, made his way into the nose of the stricken plane.

As he entered the fuselage,

"passengers were crying and screaming at me for help", Mr Pearson recalled, "I would say my main role was simply calming people down verbally and holding their hands ...

"I could hear a woman screaming from underneath the floor and every time 1 moved I thought of the floor

pressing on her and I could imagine her pain ... Some [passengers] were already dead and had horrific injuries," said Mr Pearson. "At the time I simply saw what had to be done and got on with it as best I could. It was simply adrenaline working, giving me the strength to do what I had to do."

Dr Gordon Turnbull, a psychiatrist, told the court how Mr Pearson had been unwilling to accept he was suffering from PTSD when he examined him in 1995. "Almost all the symptoms of PTSD were present at the time of the examination," said Dr Turnbull, head of the traumatic stress unit at Tice-

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hurst House Hospital in Sussex, and author of the leading textbook on the subject. "He told me he had lost interest in most of his social and sporting activities and has simply lost his zest for them. He told me he lacks direction in his life now."

Dr Turnbull said PTSD had the effect of "pulling out the



Time of trauma: Graham Pearson (above) who spent three hours helping survivors after the Mi air crash in 1989 Main photograph: lan Torrance

rug" from under a victim's feet, giving them a "foreshortened view of their future". Although his condition had since improved because of intensive therapy, Dr Turnbull said he was "guarded" about whether Mr Pearson was now able to lead "a virtually normal life". Judgment is due on Monday.

Miners' health damages could cost government £3.6bn

The Government is facing a total compensation bill of over £3.5bn to miners whose health was wrecked by working down the pits, it emerged yesterday.

Six miners fighting a high court test case seeking compensation for a variety of debilitating illnesses caused by their work underground were awarded an average of £18,000 damages each yesterday.

If this figure was carried through to the estimated 200,000 miners, former miners or their widows expected to make claims, according to government figures, the final sum will be around £3.6bn.

Mr Justice Turner found on 23 January that British Coal, the defunct nationalised industry now under government administration, was negligent in the operation of its mines.

Yesterday he settled the final claims for the six men who suffered chronic ill health from inhaling coal dust, and also ruled that Cordelia Wells, widow of one of the six miners, Samuel, should receive the full statutory bereavement damages of £7,500.

Lawyers for British Coal had tried to argue that because Mr Wells's damages for-ill health were halved because the judge ruled that smoking was half to blame for his chronic emphysema, the bereavement award should also

that Mrs Wells should receive own medical reports.

the full amount, allowing hundreds of other widows to make the same claim whether or not their deaths may have been partly attributable to smoking.

The largest damages sum of £32,500 went to Mrs Wells of Maesteg, south Wales. The other sums ranged from £25.000 down to £5,200, making a total of £110,000.

Mr Justice Turner gave lawyers for the Government 28 days to come up with a scheme to administer and settle all outstanding claims which must be made within six months of his judgment in January.

He also imposed a punitive scale of legal costs on the Government for part of the yearlong litigation for trying to argue that coal dust was not a cause of bronchitis or emphy-The judge ruled, however, sema, against the findings of its

Schools fail test of time at maths

Less than 36 minutes a day was spent teaching maths in one in eight infant schools, says a

study published yesterday. A survey by the National Foundation for Educational Research also found nearly half the infant schools questioned and a quarter of the junior schools taught maths for under three quarters of an hour a day.

The study of almost 400 schools in the autumn of 1996 points to wide differences in the way the basics are taught. The time spent on maths lessons varied from 12 minutes a day in one infants school to nearly an hour and a quarter a-day in 2 per cent of infant schools.

The NFER research follows the Government's numeracy task force advice last month that all primary schools teach maths for an hour every day. The Office for Standards in Education's annual report published on Wednesday said education remained a "lottery". Sue Harris, a senior research

officer for NFER who carried out the report, said: "The fact that there is greater variation on the time spent teaching maths is surprising. But responses did not take account of the time spent teaching maths under the guise of other subjects."

She said some schools may also have been using thematic project work to teach maths. A large number of schools

taught in line with the Government's recommendations with 36 per cent of infants and 49 per cent of juniors teaching maths for between 48 minutes and an hour a-day.

A spokesman for Ofsted said: "This is another bit of research that reiterates the need for further progress."

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Soldier's death investigated Military and civil police were yesterday co-operating in an

investigation into the death of a soldier killed while taking part in an exercise in the mountains of mid-Wales near the Army's Sennybridge Base.

Guardsman Richard King, 22, whose parents live at Sheerness in Kent, died when he was hit by a single round from a standard service rifle during night-time manoeuvres in the early hours of Thursday. More than 50 soldiers will be interviewed to seek an explanation to what an army spokesman described as "a tragic accident".

The area is one of the Army's main infantry training grounds where Nato troops, members of the Special Air Service and the Parachute Regiment exercise along with other army units.

— Tony Heath

Hindley changes jails

Moors murderer Myra Hindley was yesterday transferred from Durham prison to a medium-security jail. The Prison Service said that she was moved from Durham prison to Highpoint in Suffolk.

A Prison Service spokesman said: "Myra Hindley has today been transferred from HMP Durham to Highpoint prison in Suffolk. She is being housed in closed female accommodation suitable for a life-sentence prisoner. It is an operational decision taken by the Prison Service and it is a routine move for a life-sentence prisoner." News of the move provoked last week anger among relatives of her victims.

Teachers to vote on action

A teachers' union is to ballot members on taking industrial action to cut the red tape which it says wastes time. The National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of

Women Teachers executive committee decided to take the step after it said the Government failed to act on the recommendations to cut unnecessary bureaucracy in teaching. Teachers were to be asked to stop completing a range of paper work including some types of school reports but they would still provide short reports on children. Ballot forms are due to be sent to omon members later this term and a result is expected before the Easter school holiday.

Scottish E.coli alert

An E. coli precantionary alert was issued yesterday after tests revealed traces of the potentially lethal bacteria on meat des-

Three councils - Dundee, Perth and Angus - ordered meat tined for school meals. to be removed from schools, older people's lunch clubs, and from the meals-on-wheels service after environmental health experts in Cartisle found traces of the bug on raw meat that had been sent to school meals providers Tayside Contracts. Officials in Dundee said no cases of illness had been reported, and the "stringent" cooking procedures should ensure the bacteria had been killed by the cooking process.

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Manchester mourns tragedy of Busby Babes

Scores of Manchester United fans laid flowers beneath a statue of the team's former manager Sir Matt Busby at Old Trafford yesterday to remember the Busby Babes, who died in the Munich air disaster 40 years ago.

The aircraft crashed in a blizzard at Munich Airport in 1958, killing 23 of its passengers including eight young Manchester United players who were returning home after their victory in the European Cup quarter final against Red Star Belgrade.

Last night a special memorial service was to be held in Manchester Cathedral to mark the tragedy. A minute's silence will be held at Manchester United's home match against Bolton today at 3.04pm the time of the air disaster.

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Memorial: Flowers left yesterday at Manchester United's Old Trafford for victims of the 1958 Munich air disaster

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Japanese fads condemn pets to mass slaughter

An animal welfare scandal in Japan, where 800,000 domestic pets are being slaughtered each year after being abandoned by their owners, will be exposed on a BBC radio programme today. ian Burrell reports.

The astonishing death rate of Japanese pets has been attributed by animal welfare groups to rapidly changing trends in the ownership of certain pets, which are no longer wanted once they go out of fashion.

Recent favourites have included golden retrievers and labradors, which are the cur-rently fad, and Siberian huskies. The breeds are unsuitable for the typically confined apartments found in most Japanese cities and are often kept outside.

when they move.

against the owners. In 1996, only one prosecution for cruelty was brought in the whole of Japan. The scale of the animal

spective when compared to the death rates of domestic pets in other countries. In Britain, 17,000 stray dogs were put down last year. A team from BBC Radio's Asia File recently visited some

of the dog and cat pounds in

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Landlords are exceptionally strict on the keeping of animals and many pet-owners are forced to give up their animals

In all, 307,000 cats and 235,000 dogs were put down in Japan last year. Action is hardly ever taken

slaughter is put into further per-

conditions the animals were kept in before being put down. One terrier was delivered to the pound by its owner with par- Japanese prime minister's ofcel tape around its jaws, and a fice, said: "Our laws on animal

"This dog bites". No action was taken against the owner.

In Osaka, single cages contain up to 38 dogs, which are ex- cause the number of prosecuterminated within three days of tions is low, there is a lot of arrival. Hugh Levinson, the cruelty towards animals in programme's producer, said: Japan or that the Japanese 'These dogs were going ab- don't care for animals."

ripped off and blood on their muzzies.

He added: "It's not that the Japanese don't like animals; they are very sentimental about them. But it's a very romanticised, anthropomorphic idea and has nothing to do with the fact that dogs need walking and they bite and they tend to make a lot of mess."

The large numbers of unwanted pets are made worse by the fact that cats and dogs in Japan are rarely neutered.

Elizabeth Oliver, a British animal lover who has set up the Ark animal refuge in Japan, said Japanese people traditionally have not kept dogs but they became fashionable in the 1980s.

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"They looked around for what the popular dog was and then these booms started. There used to be the sheltie boom, then the beagle boom



Death row: A dog awaiting its fate at a Japanese pound

then the busky boom and currently it's the golden retriever boom, which is just on the wane, and it's going into labradors, cavalier spaniels," Japan and were horrified by the she said. "They change - out with this year's fashion and in with next year's."

Hideo Yamazaki, of the e around its neck saving: protection and management generally have the aim of aiding the welfare of animals ...

"It doesn't follow that besolutely nuts, jumping on top of • Asiafile is on Radio 4 at each other. Some had their fur 11.30am today.



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Prescott launches into sleaze in local government

The sleaze that can be generated by one-party domination in local government must be tackied, John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, said yesterday. Anthony Bevins, Political Editor, reports on the Government's concerted counter-attack.

A Government paper on the revitalisation of local democracy is to be published by Mr Prescott, Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions, and Hilary Armstrong, the local government minister, on Monday.

But in a speech to the Labour local government conference in Scarborough last night, Mr Prescott said: "We must be honest that there are problems. There is too little participation by the electorate in local elections, and in local government between elections.

tims of our own successes. A huge one-party majority can lead to internal strife, complacency and, in a few cases, a failure of public standards. We must tackle these problems."

Monday's paper on local democracy - "radical stuff" would be the first of three, with others to follow on value for money and Nolan-style reforms tackling standards of conduct in town halls.

"On Monday," Mr Prescott

Tory bigotry came under severe

Conservative MP Sir Julian

Critchley, who told the Oldie

magazine that while many mem-

bers were anti-Semitic, many

more were prejudiced against

other racial groups. Sir Julian, who has been a

bete noire of the Conservative

Party over many years, was MP

for Aldershot until last year,

when he retired after a long ill-

said: "The Tory Party shows

every sign of becoming a right-

wing rump, obscurantist and na-

In his Oldie interview, he

Conservatives are

says veteran wet

attack yesterday from a former long as I did."

anti-Semitic racists,

involvement in decision-making between elections; whether voting can be made easier for people, including voting at more by a whole mixture of problems. convenient locations or times; and whether the composition of attempt to tackle the root causour councils can be made more representative, something we, as a party selecting candidates,

grammes to turn round some of

our most difficult housing areas.

We are looking at... estates hit

es of poverty, rather than just

tinkering with the symptoms ...

this [is a] New Deal for Whole

the conference tomorrow, with

a night's break to get over his

Washington jet-lag - is expect-

ed to return to the issue of

sleaze and corruption in local

government: leaving no doubt

about his determination to

crack down on dubious town

hall practices that give the par-

ty a bad name.

Tony Blair, who will address

"This will be an imaginative

must address." He also raised the question of whether there should be paid local council "cabinets", saying they needed to look at "sharpening up the distinction between the executive and representative roles of local

Mr Prescott added his weight, too, to the initiative being undertaken with Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and other ministers like David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education and Employment, and Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, on rundown 'estates, outlined in yesterday's Independent.

He is expected next week to unveil plans for the 900-home Millennium Village at Green-"In some cases, we are vic- wich, which will provide a model for improvements in urban

> "We must deal with education, transport, crime prevention, jobs, housing and the whole range of issues which combine to bring to life attractive, vibrant communities," he told the Scarborough delegates.

We cannot deal with problems in deprived areas by dealing with housing, education, crime, or jobs in isolation.

"Gordon Brown will be said, "we will invite comments working with myself and other on how we can increase public ministers to draw together pro-

der that I stayed with them as

long-standing and well-publi-

cised antipathy towards the es-

tate agents and car-dealers who

took over the parliamentary

party during the Thatcher years.

Sir Julian remained a

Sir Julian says: "He has dragged

the Labour Party kicking and

screaming into the last part of

the 20th century, or perhaps into

the 21st, and that is no mean

Marxist Socialism, which of

course was the bane of Labour, and he appears to have helped to shore up the monarchy when

it was in danger."

would choose Blair."

"He has helped to destroy

He added: "To be honest, I think Blair is a very good thing,

Reflecting the old guard,

patrician snobbery that persists in the Conservative ranks, Sir Julian said of the Thatcherite generation: "There were a lot of them. They were very ob-

streperous and you could make

fun of them on the grounds that

they were the sort of people who

ate peas off their knives. It was

"One way of pricking the

- Anthony Bevins

and if I were forced to choose between Blair and Hague, I

As for the Prime Minister,

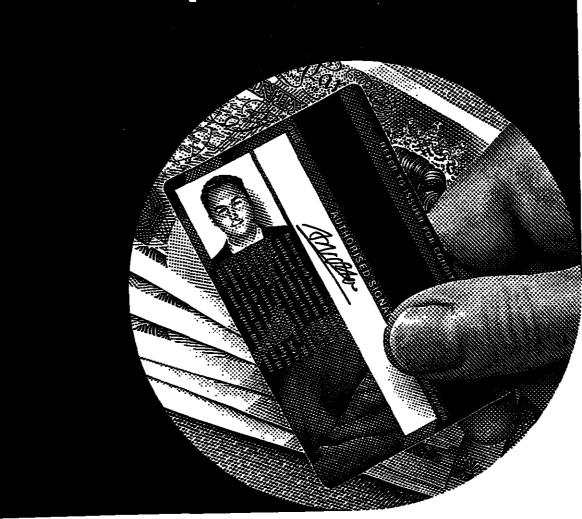
Conservative.

Nevertheless, in spite of his



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quite deliberate satire which I choose between Blair and used against certain people, for Hague, I would choose Blair' example, Tebbit, whom I dislike intensely. In my view, he is a savage man who is full of hatred. bubble of Thatcherism - and by God she had enough syco-

tionalist. They are not necessarily anti-Semitic, simply

Critchley on the Tories:

'By and large, most of them are

so unactractive I wonder I.

stayed with them as long as i

did ... if I were forced to

that many of them are anti-Semitic.

because it is not a big issue, but if you scratch them you will find

"They are certainly anti-

black. By and large, most of them are so unattractive I won-

phants around her - was to pretend that they were all as common as muck, which would annoy them intensely."

Dobson chemist plea fails

Margaret Beckett has rejected an appeal by Frank Dobson to halt attempts by supermarkets to sell non-prescription medicines such as Beecham's and Neurofen at discount prices. The Health Secretary wrote to the President of the Board

of Trade warning that community chemists could be forced out of business by supermarkets if they are allowed to slash the price of a range of household medicines which do not require a prescription. But Mrs Beckett has ordered her ministers to reject an attempt to protect the profit margins of the chemists in the Competition Bill in the House of Lords on Monday.

10/NEWS

Cancer patients 'too polite' to ask for best treatment

Cancer patients are dying of politeness, according to the Patients Association. Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor, asks if they need to get angry to get better.

In cancer, reticence can be a death sentence and good manners can delay recovery. Patients who press for the best treatments and don't take "no" for an answer have a better chance of survival.

Cathy Gritzner, chief executive of the Patients' Association, told the International Congress on Anti-Cancer Treatment in Paris yesterday: "Patients, in particular women, are dying of politeness.

"People with cancer should take the lead in ensuring they have access to the very best care available by becoming more knowledgeable and demanding about their treat-

"We have a lot to learn from the Americans. We should be more assertive, saying to doctors 'tell me what this treatment is, and what are the alternatives?"

"Clearly it is a dilemma if some treatments [such as expensive drugs] are not funded [by health authorities] but I think patients need to know that rather than being

The conference heard that the UK's cancer survival record was worse than many other European countries and the United

States. Ms Gritzner said the "yes, doctor" syndrome was one reason.

"It is because patients are not aware of what is available, what their choices are, where they can go for the best treatment," she said. The Patients' Association plans to work more closely with other medical charities and doctors to champion patients' rights, she added.

Research suggests that patients diagnosed with cancer differ in their coping strategies. Some take it in their stride while others react with hopelessness. Some studies have shown that patients with "fighting spirit" tend to do better but the term needs careful interpretation. It is a positive thisdisease-can-be-licked response not a desperate, frightened, try-anything one. Evidence suggests that people who believe they are able to overcome their disease can tolerate higher doses of chemotherapy.

One of the commonest complaints of women with breast cancer is how their fear of the disease taking over their bodies was compounded by the way the medical system took over their lives.

Debbie Howells, wife of Tottenham Hotspur soccer player, David Howells, told the conference of her battle against ovarian cancer and urged other patients not to take everything doctors told them as gospel.

Ms Howells, 29, said: "I was lucky because I was asked to take part in a clinical trial at the Royal Marsden and received the



In tune: Zoe Ball and Chris Evans at the Q Music Awards last year

Photograph: DM

Evans claims victory in breakfast war

Virgin Radio was claiming victory in the breakfast show ratings war yesterday after official listening figures showed Chris Evans had added double the number of new listeners to his show as Zoe Ball has added to Radio 1.

Evans, who bought Virgin Radio from Richard Branson in November for £84m, boosted his audience by 660,000 to 2.2m. Meanwhile, Radio 1 was able to claim that it remains the number one breakfast show, with an extra 280,000 listeners, taking Zoe Ball and partner Kevin Greening to an average audience of just under six million listeners.

However the news is not as good as it seems for the BBC. The two stations started their shows on the same day three months ago and at first the Ball-Greening pairing made the most impact. According to leaked unofficial figures, Radio 1 outstripped Evans with an extra 750,000 listeners in October. Either that was a statistical blip or the listeners didn't like what they heard because the unofficial figures show a half-million audience drop in November.

On the other hand, Evans's show has picked up listeners in and said Zoe Ball had every month and over the reversed its decline. quarter, it represents a startling

41 per cent increase. Evans's audience jump is so big it has enabled the whole of Virgin Radio to increase its audience by 23 per cent.

John Pearson, Virgin Radig's chief executive said yesterday that the result was "tremendous" and hinted that the station would be campaigning to transfer its frequency from AM to FM nationwide.

Radio 1 was emphasising that it had increased the number of young listeners tuning

— Paul McCann

Japanese cars made in UK are less reliable than imports, survey shows

There are huge differences between the reliability of some Japanese cars built in Britain and imports from Japan, according to a survey released yesterday.

An analysis of the maintenance records of 88,000 vehicles leased by the Lex Service group to hundreds of companies also showed that in a year there were nearly 25 mechanical breakdowns per hundred cars. That compares with a figure last year of 20.

Most surprisingly, cars made by Toyota and Nissan were found to have differing rates of reliability between home-made and imported models. The 700 Carina Es on the Derbyshire last year suffered 23 breakdowns per 100 vehicles compared with 5.8 for the imported Corolla model.

lenged the results. Toyota yesterday pledged to launch an investigation into quality standards at its Burnaston plant where the new Avensis model is made. Sources close to fleet built at Toyota's Burnaston plant in the company also said the Lex results may have been unduly affected by a batch of faulty spark plugs last year.

Garel Rhys, motor industry professor at

lic may account for the much of the difbest-quality components and production methods," he said.

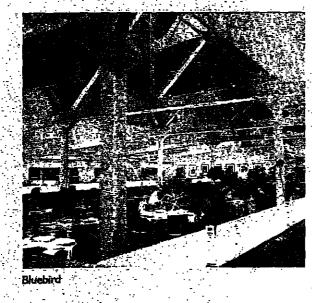
Nissan was also hit hard by the results. The Primeras produced at Sunderland had a breakdown rate of 23 per 100 cars. This compared badly with Nissan's imported On average, Toyota recorded a reliability Cardiff University, said that the very high Almera, which suffered only 1.1 breakdowns rate of 16.4. However, the company chal-standards demanded by the Japanese pubper 100 vehicles. A spokesman for Nissan el it replaced, the 190, which showed only

said that its own research showed that the one breakdown per 100 vehicles. Experts ference. "Historically, Japan has had the Primera breakdown rate was in fact only one-fifth that of the survey's.

Mitsubishi turned out to be the most reliable manufacturer - recording only 5.8 breakdowns per 100 vehicles. Citroen proved to be the worst - with a figure of 44. According to the research, Mercedes' latest C-Class is less reliable than the mod-

say this is not unusual. "With a car that is a few years old it is always being refined. With a newer car there are always little things that gradually get put right," said Bob Procter, the RAC's technical service

> — Randeep Ramesh. Transport Correspondent Toyota cuts costs, page 20



THE INDEPENDENT INDEPENDENT

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i he independent and independent on Sunday in association with Terence Contan ar delighted to offer readers the opportunity to enjoy lunch or early evening supper at six of London's top restaurants throughout January and February for £10





From Monday January 5th until Saturday February 28th, the following establishments are offering readers a two course lunch or early evening supper for just £10 per person.

How to Book

To participate in the offer simply collect one token (tokens will be printed every day until Saturday February 28th) and then telephone the restaurant of your choice quoting yourself as an Independent diner. On your arrival at the restaurant you should present your token in order to qualify for the offer. Each token is valid for a complete table booking. The tokens will be valid for one week only, and will be dated accordingly. To continue to participate in the offer. simply collect a token from the week in which you wish to dine. Pre-booking is essential and all bookings are subject to availability.

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between Monday and Wednesday the offer is extended until

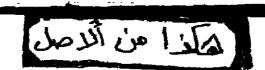
The offer is available 7 days a week at all six restaurants

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Surprisingly ordinary prices





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Ghosts of Brecht's women lay claim to his plays

The celebrations in Germany of the birth 100 years ago of the country's greatest modern dramatist are being marred by claims that Bertolt Brecht's plays were really the work of his mistresses. Ghosts are being awakened, reports Imre Karacs from Bonn.

East Germany is dead. Its revolutionary playwright lies in a Berlin cemetery, pinned down by a stake driven through his heart. Bertolt Brecht's Dracula-style send-off, at his own behest because of his paranoia about being buried alive, was regarded as a little strange in the workers' paradise in 1956. But as the ghosts of the women upon whom he had feasted return to haunt the bard, the metaphor is beginning to seem thoroughly apt.

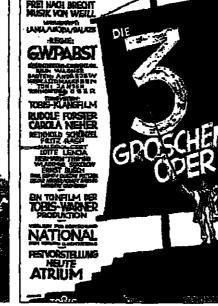
Next Tuesday marks the 100th birthday of Germany's greatest modern dramatist. Celebrations are in full swing, theatres are and drummed him out from its midst. The lowed him all the way to East Berlin. dusting off scripts unrehearsed for decades. Letters are unearthed purporting to prove that Brecht was not half as dedicated a Communist as previously thought. And, just as rehabilitation is at hand, along comes a party pooper from the United States claiming that most of the plays attributed to It has just been published, in time for the Brecht were in fact written by the author's doting concubines.

It has always been beyond dispute that the Marxist icon tyrannised women, drove them to suicide and forced them to abort his children. But only now is it emerging that Brecht exploited the wrote "80 to 90 per cent" of the "Brecht" spirit of his companions, too, harnessing their creative energies to the glory of his

According to John Fuegi, an American scholar, Brecht's women penned most of the words in such hits as The Threepenny Opera and The Caucasian Chalk Circle. The Brecht collective, Mr Fueri argues, was in on the cover of any of them. Her niece and reality a capitalist enterprise. Brecht was the master, and his women the assembly line workers who toiled night and day, expecting nothing in exchange but sexual gratification from a spindly little man afflicted with a rasping voice and a serious hygiene problem.

Mr Fuegi's first attempt to explode the Brecht myth, in a book published in the US in 1994, was denounced by the German literary establishment. The International Brecht Society, of which he was a founding member, spotted 600 errors in his work, joined the Brecht coterie in 1933 and fol-





A scene from the 1931 film of The Threepenny Opera, and a programme leaflet. It is claimed Elisabeth Hauptmann wrote most of the play

author has spent the last three years removing the howlers with the help of a German expert. The result is an improved German edition entitled Brecht & Co., fortified with testimonies from witnesses and buttressed by more than 1,000 footnotes.

Brecht's most important muse, Mr Fuegi states, was Elisabeth Hauptmann, credited by the playwright with the translation of John Gay's The Beggar's Opera. But Hauptmann, a literary editor, in fact adaptation - The Threepenny Opera which catapulted him to fame. She became Brecht's life-long mistress, accompanying the writer to exile in Denmark, Russia, and

Hauptmann was to co-author many other "Brecht" plays, without ever appearing legal heir is now suing the publishers for back-dated royalties which, according to Mr Fuegi, might run into "seven or eight figures".

Margarete Steffin, a writer who Brecht bedded in 1931, is thought to have been the inspiration behind Galilco and The Good Woman of Setzuan. She accompanied the entourage to Moscow, where she died en route to the United States in 1941.

Finally, Mr Fuegi cites the influence of Ruth Berlau, a Danish stage director, who

While she was not roped into writing, Berlau's ideas came to the fore in production, an important dimension to the Brecht experience.

In all this time Brecht also had a wife, Helene Weigel, who was to become the custodian of the Brecht archives after her husband's death, as well as the head of the Berliner Ensemble, the theatre in East Berlin founded by Brecht and dedicated to his ocuvre. Two other members of the extended family, Paula Banholzer and Marianne Zoff, took care that the playwright's genes were propagated, but are believed to have contributed little to his literary

In this collective, says Mr Fuegi, were born some of the century's greatest plays. Brecht was full of ideas, but he did not have the attention span to carry them through. He would start the women out on a theme, and they would come back with a complete dialogue. The creative tension in the workshop stemmed from Brecht's manipulative skills; mutual jealousy kept the employees on their

For all his progressive ideas, Brecht was old-fashioned in sexual politics. Relations between the genders, he declared, was a contract in which "the man can demand a tremendous amount and the woman must give a tremendous amount". He got away with it perhaps because, as his daughter recalled later, "he could charm the birds off



100th anniversary of Brecht's birth are in full swing, but a US scholar has dampened the fun Photograph: Hulton Getty/AKG

scraps of documents and hearsay, because the down-trodden proletariat of Brecht & Co never complained. Critics have, therefore, been able to charge that his book is "fuelled by hatred", though they can no longer fault his scholarship. Mr Fuegi, the son of a Swiss waiter at the Savoy, has spent

terloper in the eyes of German literary circles - whom Mr Fuegi likens to the Mafia Verlag, the Frankfurt-based publisher which holds Brecht's global copyright. Some German academics are now est reprints.

That leaves Mr Fuegi having to rely on 33 years ploughing through the Brecht willing to concede that Mr Fuegi may have archives. But that still makes him an in- a point, but not Suhrkamp. As the company's chief, Siegfried Unseld, recently proclaimed: "Brecht's works stem from no - and a threat to the earnings of Suhrkamp one else but Brecht." But it has been noted that Hauptmann's name, at least, has surfaced on the cover of some of the lat-

Victory for Spain's lusty roadside bulls

Spain's Supreme Court has finally granted a definitive reprieve for the Osborne bulls - those vast steel Spanish brandy adverts that bestride the country and have become one of its most potent images.

The announcement brings to a happy conclusion a nineyear campaign to defend an icon of almost mythical significance. The bulls "have superseded their original function as a commercial trademark, to become an integral and decorative part of the national landscape", said the Supreme Court.

Osborne blacked out its name and product from the bulls' flanks in 1989 when a Motorways Law killed off roadside advertising, but the po-faced so-

J)

cialist transport minister tossed the concession aside and said the bulls themselves must go.

The government then trampled underfoot a massive "save the bulls" campaign and fined the company £5,000 in 1994 for leaving the bulls still standing. But the final decision was left to the Supreme Court.

Numerous artists out of solidarity collaborated in a lavish celebratory coffee-table book. A Big Black Bull; an American photographer crisscrossed the country for three years snapping the remaining 97 of the original 500 examples of the world's best-known taurean image, and an exhibition wowed Madrid's smart Fine Arts Circle.

The bull-shaped steel hoard-



Famous silhouette: The Osborne buli

ings enjoy a reputation for conferring virile powers, and are legendary nocturnal rendezvous for young couples who lie in the

moonlit shadows of the vast, er, silhouette.

Such an amorous encounter was immortalised in Bigas Luna's hit film Jamon Jamon in which, after the breakdown of the relationship, the young hero returns to the scene and strikes the steel beast's gigantic testicles with a stick until they crash to the ground - an unforgettable image of rage and impotence.

This must have been what the Supreme Court had in mind when it decided: "Aesthetic and cultural interests must prevail in deciding that the bulls be preserved... the image has entered the European consciousness as covert and

subliminal advertising."

— Elizobeth Nosh, Madrid



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Nine dead in Sri Lanka suicide blast

At least nine people were killed vesterday when a female suicide bomber detonated explosives strapped to her body at a military checkpoint in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo, police and witnesses said.

The explosion happened only hours after the Prince of Wales left the island, following a four-day visit to mark Sri Lanka's 50th independence anniversary. Government forces had been on high alert for attacks by Tamil Tiger rebels during the anniversary festivities. A senior police official at the

blast site said the dead included three civilians, one of whom was the bomber, who detonated the explosives after being asked to step out of a van at the checkpoint.

The force of the explosion scattered body parts over a wide area. Sand bags stacked around the check post were splattered with blood. The nine dead included two soldiers and three airmen. Officials had originally put the toll at seven, but increased the figure after recovering body parts.

- Reuters, Colombo

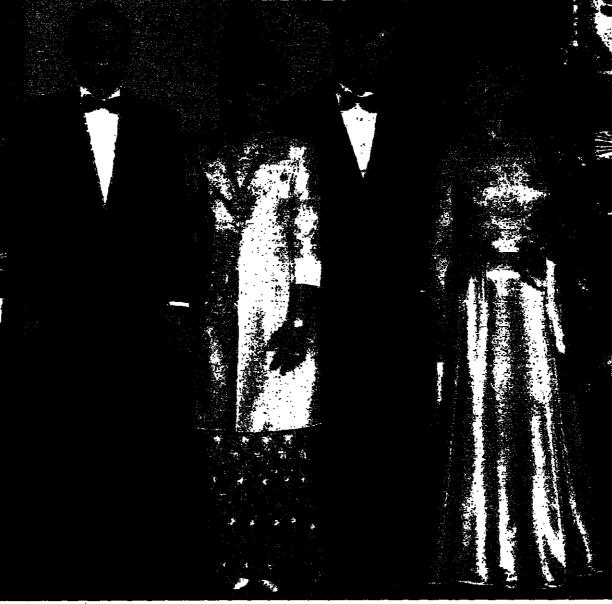
The Blair holiday snaps: Cherie's record of her US trip with Tony - February '98



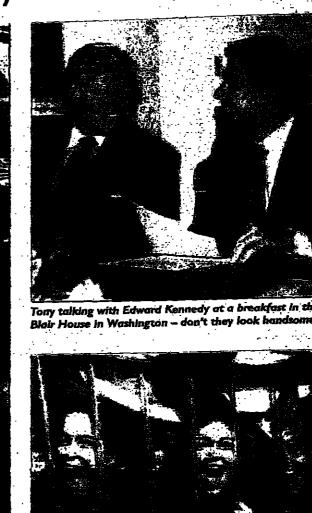
Bill and Hillary greeting us at the White House as



Elton John hits ust the right note, as always, enterto



just look at those frocks. This is Tony (left), me, Bill and Hillary posing for photographs after we arrived for dinner



A terrific reception for Tony and Bill from the students Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Springs



Och ... my shoes! Hillary and me in the Grand Foyer for the welcome ceremony



Tony and Bill at a rally - they always do see eye to eye Photograph: EPA/AIP



Oh dear, it's that Monica Lewinsky, with her stepmother; moving quickly on ..

British stiff upper lip trembles at the Tony and Bill love-in

The Blairs and the Clintons reinvented the 'special relationship' this week with a love-fest in Washington. The Prime Minister said he wanted to see an end to 'quaint, oldfashioned' Britain, a nation of bowler hats and stiff upper lips. Mary Dejevsky reports.

Effusive in his thanks for the warmth of Bill's welcome, Tony drummed home how "proud" he was to have Bill "not only as

a colleague but as a friend. Bill spoke of -donned dinner jackets and ballgowns for to, said Tom Hanks: "good band. good visions and shared aims. In summit mode, they quoted FDR and Churchill. In mutual support mode, Bill said Tony was "so wise and so right".

And, like teenagers, they joshed about it. Did Bill appreciate Tony's compliments? "Of course not," he laughed at the closing press conference. "He should have

come here and dumped all over me." The lighthearted atmosphere of informality was most marked at Thursday's White House banquet, where 240 guests - the largest number at any White House banquet since Mr Clinton came to office

"comradeship and partnership", of shared a relaxed and almost informal occasion beneath the chandeliers of the East Room.

The guests spanned the worlds of Hanks and Harrison Ford - politics and punditry, with a larger-than-usual contingent of journalists: from star television anchor Peter Jennings and socialite editor, John Kennedy Jur, who memorably scolded his relatives in print as "poster-boys for had hehaviour" to the trio of British editors in New York, Tina Brown, Anna Wintour and Liz Tilberis. "It's a bit like a wedding party." Elton John told reporters. "Like the wildest wedding" he had been

With tables settings and candle clusters chosen personally by Hillary Clinton in the showbusiness - Barbara Streisand, Tom first hostess role she has often shunned, the guests sat down to a menu described as "new American" - lean and fresh but combining an improbable range of flavours. The entertainment came from Elton John and Stevie Wonder - with a knighthood for British-born American entertainer Bob Hope announced in advance as a bridge between the generations.

But it was in the toasts that the newstyle Special Relationship came into its own. we were quaint, a little old-fashioned - a They could joke about history: Mr Clin-

ton about a special relationship that began with "slashing and burning" in 1785; Mr Blair about the briefing paper for White House staff which told them how to pronounce his name and ticked "yes" against the question: "English-speaking?".

Mr Blair took the opportunity to do a hard sell on his "new" nation. "For years we were known more for what we once were than what we could be. For years we were content to rest on former glories, rather than the self-confidence of present day achievement.

"I know what many used to think of us: country of pageantry and ceremony and stiff

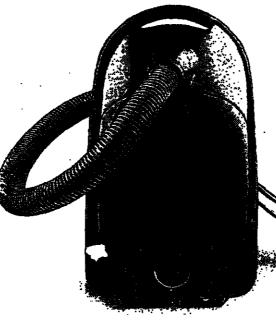
upper lips." Now, he said, "Britain is a nation unafraid of change - confident, looking forward."

The two leaders had been mobbed like at a suburban school that had ties with a school in Bristol. Mr Blair dispensed with his prepared script to talk of the limitless opportunities for the next generation. Mr Clinton reminisced about visiting Bristol during his spell at Oxford as a Rhodes scholar.

The wives, by Cherie's choice it was said. remained in the background, low-key professionals shunning the reflected limelight of their husbands, except to sparkle as gold-clad ornaments at the banquet.

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Trust in God: Women at prayer in a Baghdad mosque yesterday. Many of Iraq's neighbours fear that an attack by the West could lead to Iraq's break-up Photograph: Enric Marti/AP

Force would stir Middle East cauldron

A war against Saddam Hussein is more possible than at any time in the last seven years. Britain and the United States are keen to turn up the pressure and clearly will not shrink from military action. But such action does not just have implications for Saddam Hussein, argues Steve Crawshaw, recently in the Gulf.

It is the art of diplomacy: pretend that everybody agrees with you, even when they manifestly do not. Thus it was with Robin a superpower and an ex-super-

sia have repeatedly made clear is unfortunate that the United their deep opposition to military action, Mr Cook was keen to imply that everybody is on board.

the fact that Britain is "leaving no diplomatic avenue unex- personal life. plored". But if all else fails, he has repeatedly insisted, then blame will lie entirely with Saddam Hussein.

away from this and leave Saddam Hussein in possession of military force on this occasion."

On the one hand, it can all be Cook in the Gulf this week. power who both want to demon-

States is upping the ante against Saddam Hussein at a time when the US President has so many His standard line emphasises obvious reasons for wishing the spotlight to swing away from his

Britain is not merely Washington's poodle on this point. Standing up for principles is not merely a childish thing that Mr Cook argued: "If we walk grown-up countries learn to put away. France, Russia and these weapons that could wipe mercial and political reasons for out whole cities, then the wishing to lay off Baghdad. prospect of war in the region is Fear of bloodshed has less to do much greater than if we do use with it than wanting to stay on good terms with the regime. Britons still feel ashamed of acseen as mere grandstanding by tions by Neville Chamberlain that came as such a relief at the

time; "peace in our time" is not

proud of. That is doubly true if the threat of force persuades a tyrant to back down.

Nevertheless, the consequences of military action against lraq go well beyond reducing the threat of chemical and biological warfare being loosed upon the world. If Saddam Hussein is humiliated militarily, then that could spell an end to the Saddam regime. So far, so good. But, if the Saddam regime begins to China all have a mixture of comuprising are high.

Iraq is, in the words of Robin Cook, a "lively coalition of different groups - the Kurds, the marsh Arabs and so forth". If those very disparate groups rebel, question marks hang over the survival of Iraq itself. And that is a prospect which fills

Even though France and Rus-strate their macho qualities. It necessarily something to be Iraq's neighbours with horror, terms of the break-up of Iraq. Diplomats in Riyadh note the They [Arab leaders] don't want "growing sympathy" among to see that happen."

> how Saddam must understand that if things go wrong, he will be the author of his own destruction. For the Saudis and for others in the region, the potential disintegration of Iraq is a higher price to pay than the continuance in power of Saddam Hussein. Mr Cook, when addressing the same problem. sounded almost insouciant. He noted: "If Saddam were to be seriously undermined - in a way which we would welcome -

Saudis for their Iraqi neigh-

bours. Worries about Iraqi civil-

less, the Saudis were as on-mes-

sage as could have been hoped

for, with a Cookian phrase about

In London or Washington, the bringing to heel of a dictaian suffering are real. None the tor secms a laudable aim. Among Iraq's neighbours, however, the destabilising implications are high on the agenda. It is an important divide. If this week's diplomatic huffing and puffing is successful, then Saddam will climb down off his pedestal without any military action. But if push comes to military shove, the knock-on effects will be enormous. The paradox remains: for some, Iraq ruled by a despot is the lesser evil, compared with a chaotic Iraq suffering from a vacuum of power. Wanting to be rid of Saddam is logical, but being worried about an Iraq without there could be consequences in Saddam is logical, too.

Balloonists break record

Determined that their journey would not be wasted, the three balloonists on the failed round-the-world attempt broke a second record yesterday. China's refusal to allow Breitling Orbiter 2 to enter its airspace meant that there was no chance of the crew, including Briton Andy Elton, meeting their original goal. But the balloon broke the record for the longest non-stop unrefucled flight after 11am yesterday, shattering a record set by the experimental aircraft Voyager in 1986. On Tuesday, the Breitling team broke the world record for the longest time spent in the air by a balloon.

Germany passes spy law

Germany's upper house of parliament approved a controversial constitutional amendment that would restore police surveillance powers outlawed since the Nazi era. The amendment, much criticised by civil rights groups, will give police broad eavesdropping powers withheld after the war in reaction to the arbitrary rule of the Gestapo. Electronic surveillance is currently only allowed in Germany if there is an overwhelming suspicion that a crime is on the verge of being committed. ___ Reuters, Bonn

Scot dies on SA peak

A Scottish climber fell to his death while abseiling down a rock face in the vicinity of the Lion's Head peak in Cape Town, South African police said. Twin brothers Gavin and Mark Ryce, 27, of Edinburgh, were on holiday when the accident occurred, a police spokesman said. The craggy slopes of Cape Town's Table Mountain are popular among climbers from around the world.

- Reuters, Cape Town

Political street game

City officials in Lagosrenamed the street in front of the Unit-ed States embassy after the US Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, two weeks after a New York City corner was named for the murdered wife of a Nigerian dissident. The renaming of Eleke Crescent was done "in honour of the indefatigable visionary leader", a local official said. In spite the objections from the Nigerian government, a Manhattan street corner opposite the Nigerian United Nations Mission was was unveiled as "Kadirat Abiola Corner" last month after the wife of Moshood Abiola, the apparent winner of Nigeria's 1993 presidential election, who is now in jail.

___ AP, Lagos

Calf breaks for freedom

German police said they used an automatic weapon to shoot a calf that fled from an abattoir in an escape attempt that contrasts starkly with the happy ending of British boars Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Pig. The calf absconded after being delivered to a slaughterhouse in Fulda, in central Germany. A police spokesman said it seized its opportunity and fled, running for several miles across fields and getting close to a railway line and a main road before being killed.

— Reuters, Fulda

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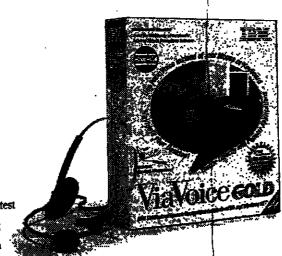
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Republicans heal the rift in Australia

Australia's constitutional convention was nearly derailed by battles between the various republican groups. But Robert Milliken in Sydney says a consensus is now emerging over how to replace the Queen.

After a week of acrimonious debate, the Constitutional Convention reached its halfway point yesterday, apparently heading for a compromise on the question of an alternative bead of state.

The sticking point has not been the monarchists, who comprise less than half the delegates to the convention in the capital, Canberra.

They have vowed to vote against any republican model, however "minimalist" its proposed changes to the 1901 constitution that has a monarch at

The biggest division has been among the republicans themselves, over the question of whether the head of state should be elected directly, or by both houses of parliament.

At one point, several republicans - mainly from Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory - threatened to join the monarchists at the convention's final vote next week, unless their fellow republicans agreed to the direct election formula.

Their target was the Australian Republican Movement, the biggest republican lobby group, led by Malcolm Timbull. a Sydney lawyer and merchant

They accused Mr Turnbull's group of élitism owing to its insistence that parliament must choose the head of state.

Turnbull model being rammed non our throats of declared Shane Stone, chief minister of around the country urging them the Northern Territory.

that a directly elected president next Friday.

could become a rival power to the prime minister in Australia's Westminster-style demo-

Late yesterday, both republican factions appeared to have kissed and made up.

There is talk of two possible compromises. One would allow Australians to nominate choices for the head of state in a plebiscite, after which parliament would make the final decision.

The other compromise envisages a council of "eminent Australians", which could appoint and also dismiss the head of state on the advice of the prime minister.

This latter plan would be the driest and most "minimal" change of all. John Howard, the Prime Minister, an opponent of constitutional change, on Thursday called it the "least worst" republican model.

Mr Howard has promised to put whatever model the convention agrees on to a referendum next year, with a deadline of January 2001 for the introduction of a republic if that proves to be the outcome of the referendum.

Mr Howard has been a political loser at the convention. One by one, several ministers in his right-of centre Liberal Party government have come out in favour of a republic, including his most senior colleague, Peter Costello, the Treasurer (finance minister). Another prominent Liberal, Tony Abbott, a former leader of the monarchist camp, switched sides during the week.

Newspapers have portrayed Mr Howard as isolated, with photographs of him sitting glumly on the front beach of the old Parliament House, where the convention is being

The convention seems to We've had a gutful of the have fired Australia's imagination. Delegates have been to vote one way or the other Mr Turnbull's group argues when the convention ends



Test case: Chat-show host Oprah Winfrey, whose comments about mad cow disease have landed her in court in Texas facing a lawsuit of nearly £7m Photograph: Eric Gray/AP.

Why Amarillo's cowboys are not all mad at Oprah

Oprah Winfrey's beef trial in Amarillo conjures up images of angry cowboys circling the courthouse waiting to lasso her and drag her through the streets. But David Usborne finds most Texas ranchers ride Dodge four-by-fours these days, not horses. And not all of them want Oprah to lose.

Each spring, cattleman Jerry Curtis spends a week doing what most of us still understand to be ranching. At a are no fewer than 18,500 head frey dedicated one of her profriend's spread in New Mexion he and his wife, Donna, ride can imagine walking across Britain. More importantly, she wrestle them down for brand- the pens to the other.

ing. But they go for fun. As a living, he laughs, the place to Mr Curtis. More stock bro-"don't pay worth a toot".

sure, is his own cattle-raising business here in the panhandle of Texas. On about 160 acres just outside Hereford, in Deaf Smith County - Mr Curtis runs Beef-Tech. This is a feeding-station where young animals spend their last months being fattened before being shipped off for slaughter. To grasp the sheer intensi-

ty of Mr Curtis's operation, you have only to glance across his property. It is a checkerboard of iron-fenced pens, each one seething with rump and fur. On a relatively small acreage, there of cattle. Squint a little, and you

Nor do these animals belong ker than rancher, he is rearing What does pay a toot, for them for other people, individuals from across the United States, who pay him to buy and feed them up. If all goes well they get a decent return when he sends them to market.

> Sometimes, of course, things do not go well. Beef prices have taken some knocks of late, notably because of economic problems in Asia and previously in Mexico, which have damaged US exports. And then, almost two years ago, there was a slightly more unusual episode.

> It was April 1996, when the talk-show queen Oprah Wingrammes to mad cow disease in



Firm on beef: An Amarillo restaurant defies Oprah

ed that bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) was bound to surface in America some day. That has landed her this week in a courtroom in Amarillo, where she faces a \$10.6m (£6.58m) lawsuit premised on horses, round up steers and their backs from one edge of swore off burgers for good af- new and never-before-tested ter one of her guests suggest- foodstuff disparagement laws.

Like every other Texan catleman, Mr Curtis was upset by the programme. In the days following its showing, beef cattle futures on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange took a dive. And what has to be realised, he says, is that it was not so much the ranchers who suffered but adds: "The disparagement those who had invested in the cattle on farms like his. Some were hurt badly enough to get

out of beef rearing for good. Although he insists it should be counted as just one of those unpredictable turns that will always affect the beef market, he has no doubt her comments had an impact: "The way they beef safe. His conviction that presented it, I don't think people were given the whole picture and all the facts. It was something of a scare deal and Mr Curtis concludes with ap-I think some people have

stopped eating beef."

those suing Ms Winfrey. There are risks in taking her to court. not least that if she loses, she might, in her anger, encourage her fans to boycott beef. Given that her show attracts about 20 million viewers, that could be genuinely damaging. He case will be hard to prove, because they will have to show she knowingly lied and I don't

think she's that kind of lady." Naively, perhaps, Mr Curtis hopes the trial will leave the public thinking not about BSE but appreciating the efforts that the industry takes to keep BSE has been kept out of the American herd is impressive. Tall and lanky with huge hands. parent confidence: "Never say never, but I think it would be He did not, however, join impossible for us to get BSE".

US general admits cable car crash jet was flying too low

Bending to the fury of Italian ward about a combat aircraft public opinion, US military officials finally acknowledged yesterday that the aircraft which crashed into a cable-car line in the Dolomites and killed 20 people this week had been flying well below the minimum permitted altitude.

Brigadier-General Guy Vander Linden, the senior Marines commander in Europe, sought to mend the cracks that have opened in relations between Italy and the United States by overruling earlier statements by his colleagues, who had suggested there was nothing unto-

shooting beneath cable-car lines at the speed of sound.

"The point of impact is well below the approved minimum altitude," he said. He also sought to mend a disagreement with the Italian Defence Ministry about the plane's flight path. He acknowledged that the plane was not on "the centreline of the flight track" when it hit the cable car, merely within a 10-nautical-mile-wide corridor.

The general's finely-tuned words were symptomatic of the tension that has built up between the two countries since



Tuesday's accident. Despite pledges of full co-operation, the two countries have fallen out on everything from the causes of

the accident to their respective rights to prosecute the Prowler aircraft's pilot and crew.

Yesterday, the Americans

denunciation by the public

removed the plane's flight recorder after it returned to base even though it had been impounded by the Italian judiciary. They gave the flight recorder back after an angry

prosecutor.

The twisted wreckage of

crashed on Tuesday, after

its wires were severed by a

were forced to admit they had

Photograph: AFP

the cable car which

A special military team flown out from the Marine base in

Cherry Point, North Carolina, is working on its own investigation and intends to press any charges that arise in the United States.

Yesterday, leaks from Aviano, the US military base where the aircraft was based, suggested that the pilot, Richard Ashby. 30, was having problems with his altimeter at the time of the impact and did not intentionally dip so low into the valley above Cavalese. The Italian lawyer representing the crew also maintained that the cable car lines were not marked on two of the

three maps in the plane. — Andrew Gumbel, Rome

Friends in the North call to tear down the Korean wall

Berlin Wall style holes in the heavily-militarised barrier that has long divided the Korean peninsula, according to one of its senior diplomats.

It might sound like a magnanimous gesture from the highly secretive Stalinist state, long secluded from the rest of the world by ideology. However, the barrier it wants to demolish actually belongs to its rival South Korea. The South regards the North as an aggressive adversary, possibly armed with nuclear weapons, and is unlikely to be impressed.

Less than four years ago an official from the North threatened to turn Seoul into a "sea of fire" after talks broke down. Two years later, the North also threatened to test its No Dong missiles and mounted a show of aggression by sending armed troops into the demilitarised

North Korea's ambassador to Russia. Son Song Pil, was yesterday quoted by Itar-Tass saying that the move could eventually lead to the destruction of the entire wall - a development which would constitute a significant step towards peace between the two

Koreas and even reunification. His remarks probably owe much to diplomatic gamesmanship. But they follow several recent signs that the bitterly hostile relations between the two Koreas - one as resolutely communist as the other is capitalist - may at last be easing, 45 years after the Korean War. Both sides are still technically

Last year, North Korean negotiators sat down with American, South Korean, and Chinese officials for the first substantive a long record of crowing at the shortcomings of the South, the

North Korea wants to open up famine-stricken and backward North has been unexpectedly quiet about South Korea's sudden plunge from boom to melt-down.

Fears about the North's nuclear programme have eased after it agreed to suspend sensitive development work in exchange for light-water nuclear reactors from the South, Japan and the US. And South Korea's president-elect, Kim Dae-jung, has been talking about increased exchanges and economic co-operation with his Northern neighbours.

According to Itar-Tass, North Korea "proposes making passages" in the wall, which was built by the South in the 1970s, as a "first step towards its full demolition". But, he warned, the process could be expected to be long and difficult.

North Korea has been pressing for the wall's demolition for years but after realising the process would be slow, had opted to start by opening up some gaps. A similar process foreshadowed the demolition of the Berlin Wall in 1989; but then, it was East Germany which began demolishing its own barrier.

The ambassador said the issue now depended on a political decision from South Korea which, though immersed in an economic crisis, is certain to feara flood of refugees southwards.

Floods, drought, tidal waves and a poor harvest have produced a famine of such proportions in North Korea that last month the World Food Programme launched a \$378m (£236m) appeal for food.

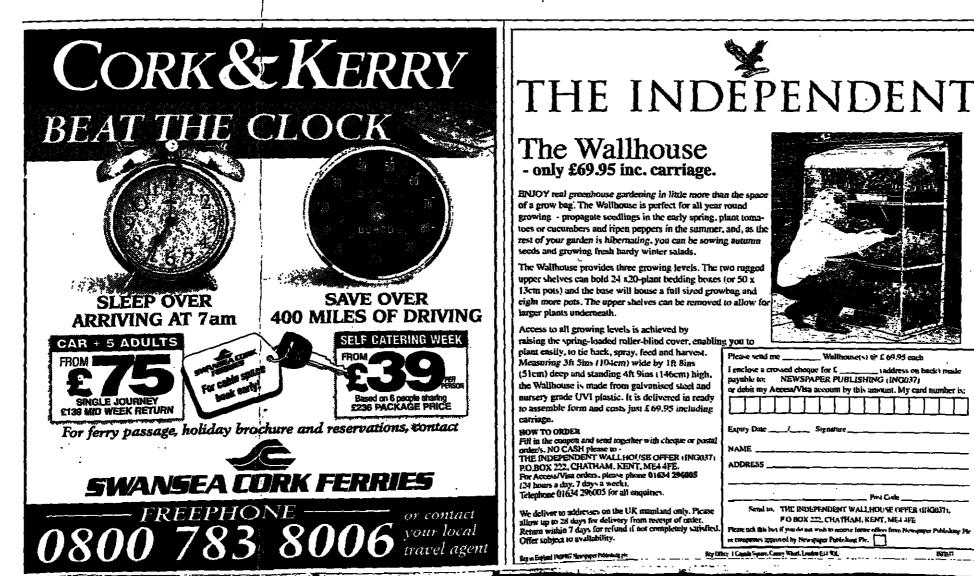
Caught in a vacuum caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union, other parts of the North's infrastructure are in disаттау. The Red Cross has said peace talks in 40 years. Despite that health services there are close to collapse. — Phil Reeves, Moscow

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Nelson Mandela delighted white South Africans when he donned a Springbok shirt. But now he is embroiled in a row over racism in rugby which may end with his appearance in court Mary Braid in Cape Town reports.

Three years ago President Mandela thrilled white South Africa by appearing in a Springbok rugby shirt. Embracing the old regime's national game - rugby is a quasi-religious institution for Afrikaners - was an inspired gesture in the campaign to achieve racial reconciliation.

Those were the early days of naive hope and great expectations when, with hindsight, gestures were mistaken for substance. That the road to reconciliation is proving long and hard was confirmed this week by the fact that President Mandela has been subpoenaed to give evidence in a court battle between the government and rughy's old guard.

At the centre of the dispute is the management of a game in which, four years after the arrival of black majority rule, players, organisers and fans remain almost exclusively white.

Cricket, the other great white South African sport, has taken itself to the townships to pull in blacks. When it comes to racial transformation, rugby is miles behind, dogged by accusations of racism. The cause was not helped when Andre Markgranff, the national coach, was sacked last year for calling

rlack rugby officials "kaffirs". Mr Mandela says he is quite happy to testify. But many will view its use of the national flag

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arrogance and obstinacy of Louis Luyt, the South African Rugby Football Union (Sarfu) president. For years he has dominated the game, and his grip on the sport, despite the efforts of a handful of officials, remains absolute.

Mr Luyt, who made his fortune in fertiliser, recently quashed an internal Sarfu revolt against him. He also humiliated the leader of the rebellion, a Coloured (mixed-race) rugby official called Brian van Rooyen. Mr van Rooyen then took his allegations of racism and financial mismanagement - including involvement of Mr Luyt's relatives in the commercial side of the game - to the government, already frustrated by the state of rugby, and by Mr

Mr Luyt ignored all government appeals for the rugby union to co-operate with an investigation and instructed provincial unions not to comply with requests for information. Now he is in court challenging the government's right to appoint a commission to investigate. The case got off to a suitably bitter start when Mr Luyt accused Steve Tshwete, the sports minister, of conducting a personal vendetta against him. He also said Mr Mandela had allowed himself to be used when he rubber-stamped the formation of the commission.

Mr Luyt's lawyers argued that since Sarfu received no money from the state, the way it conducted its business was a private matter. The government's lawyers disagreed. They insisted rugby was a crucial factor in rebuilding South Africa, and that if Sarfu was seen as a private concern, the government would have to resee his summons as proof of the and use of the Springbok name.



Happier days: Mr Mandela with captain Francois Pienaar after the Springboks won the World Cup in an epic encounter with the All Blacks. Now the national game is mired in controversy

Yesterday Joel Netshitenzhe, the President's spokesman, said there might still be an appeal against the *somewhat extraordinary" decision to subpoena Mr Mandela to appear in court next month. There are concerns that a precedent could be set which would restrict the President's constitutional powers. Anyone would be able

to challenge his decisions and he would spend all his time in court. Outside the court-room the battle goes on.

A few days ago Mluleki George, the National Sports Council president, called for an international boycott of rugby if Sarfu did not come up with more racially representative

The national team now boasts one Coloured member. "This is not a threat," he said. "But a warning about how serious the situation in rugby has become. If we [the NSC] do not see a change this season we will be forced to take drastic stepsand that means calling for a stop to any international rugby teams coming to play in South

Africa. It is an extreme measure but we and the underprivileged communities cannot wait for ever for change." The irony of an apartheid-era device being resurrected in the new South Africa was not lost. Hostilities look certain to heighten unless Mr Luyt undergoes a sudden and entirely uncharacteristic change of heart.

Gentle touch fails to impress President's foes

Women and disabled people made up the guard of honour for Nelson Mandela when he opened Parliament yesterday. Mary Braid in Cape Town says they could not shield him from harsh criticism over rising crime and other failings.

It may have been the most politically correct opening of parliament in the world. When Mr Mandela walked down the red carpet to open THE HALL AND PREPARATION OF THE PARAMETERS session before the country's second democratic elections, he was flanked by 60 disabled children and wheelchairbound adults.

Although the military men lined up for his ascent of the stairs into parliament's Great Hall, the guard of honour for the first time was entirely female. After the political fireworks of six weeks ago at the ANC party conference in Mafikeng, it was a surprisingly soft occasion. At the Mafikeng conference he appeared to serve notice on. the privilege of the white minority, in an attack on what he said was their lack brief Richio Actions in the reconciliation.

Yesterday the President, who has handed his party and day-to-day running of govemment to his deputy, Thabo Mbeki, dropped the language of accusation for a more moderate appeal to conscience. All South Africans, and especially whites, should perform voluntary community service, to give back to society what they had gained. He called for "moral regeneration" and a "new patriotism" to fight crime and unemployment. "This is our call to all South Africans, to

firm up the moral fibre of our nation ... not because the government says so, but be-Chick Heinkindommonio TERRESON IL

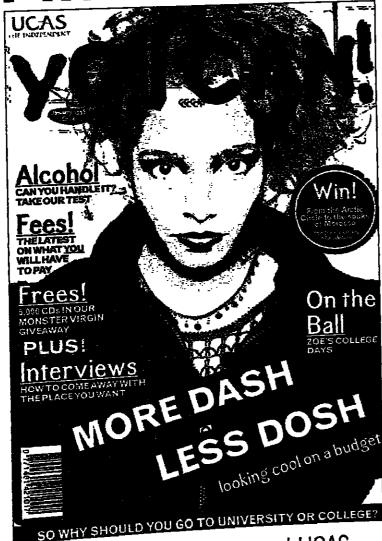
Although he defended the government's record in delivering basic services to the poor, he admitted for the first time that the government would not meet its election promise to build 1 million houses in five years. It was a significant admission, given that elections are only a year away. Financial analysis were happy with his continued commitment to fiscal targets and with his promise that the numbers working in the public sector would be cut.

But the announcement will have dismayed many in a country where unemployment among blacks is ramparts However allies Britally Medical Size designed to encourage companies to employ more blacks. Political analyst Steven Friedman said he was surprised the President had chosen to broach the subject of cutting an estimated 1.2 million publicsector jobs ahead of next year's elections. "It is a daunting task for them in a pre election year," he said.

President Mandela declined to sugar the pill for ordinary voters. But he did not how to business leaders who criticise the new employment bill. The government would not be deterred by the "sirens of self-interest" being sounded in defence of privi-LEDENTE SANCE OF HIS INSTITUTE THAT equated women, blacks and the disabled with low standards. Opposition parties condemned the speech as lacklustre. They were particularly scathing of the President's insistence that the country's crime problem was being exaggerated and that most crimes had decreased since his government came into power.

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ROBERT HANKS

There is a lot of noise in the world. Even in a quiet room on a winter's day, a quick census of extraneous noise produces the following: car motors, occasional distant honks, plane overhead, wind swishing through trees, light-toned hum of computer (with clacking of keyboard and mouse optional), creaking chair, whispers of air pushing up partially blocked nostrils, and faint, discontented growls reaching up from my abdomen.

With all this rowdiness going on, it seems odd that radio should be based on silence. That probably needs re-phrasing; radio is based on an assumption of silence - if a noise occurs, it will have some purpose or meaning. In effect, this means two sorts of noise are permissible, speech and music; everything else, all that background clutter, is rigorously excluded. Trying to get ordinary, uncensored noise on to the radio is like trying to get past a nightclub bouncer in torn jeans and muddy DMs.

Just how much that noise means to us was glimpsed in a short, sharp feature on Radio 3 last night. In The Acoustics of Everyday Life, Derek Sugden, an acoustic engineer whose credits include Glyndebourne and Snape Maltings, talked about the sound peculiar to a number of sites: a glassed-in shopping arcade, a London street, a Hawksmoor church, a tube station, a concert hall, a wood, the seashore. His point was that uncorrupted silence, like absolute zero, never happens - noise, like water, leaks in through the tiniest cracks. The silence behind what we hear on the radio is thoroughly artificial.

Most of the time, that's all to the good - you don't want to hear Sue MacGregor, say, rustling crisp packets over the eight o'clock news. Where it is most annoying, though, is in drama. Take the new serialisation of PD James's Devices and Desires (R4, Thursday). Admittedly Dalgleish, the poet-detective, is an improbable Plod, and infects the whole affair with a plodding improbability. But James's stiffness is exacerbated by the wooden unreality of the radio world - a dinner party where nobody scrapes chairs. clinks glasses, slurps coffee; a whistling serial killer who's pitch-perfect and studio-recorded. That headless corpse in the library? It's the listener's sense of involvement,

At last, a new symphony with tunes you can hum

'The symphony - all bits and pieces... No one would understand... no one... no one... Don't let anyone tinker with it...' And, for over 60 years, no one did.

But now Elgar's deathbed wishes have been disobeyed, the sketches for his final symphony have been completed and the result, says Stephen Johnson, is a work that signals a new direction for classical music.

We had just reached the end of the private première of "Elgar's Third Symphony". Audience and orchestra had at last stopped applauding. A young composer (who may prefer to remain nameless) bent towards my ear and muttered: "All right, how many first performances have you come out of recently humming the tunes?" Of course it's a trite question, and composer X's carefully ironic tone didn't make it any less so. We've moved on from themes and development these days, haven't we? Composers of all persuasions are trying to find new ways of cultivating the lytical impulse. But four months after X cautiously posed his question, I am still finding it hard to think of a single new piece from the past 10 years that has made me feel like opening my throat and singing - except, strikingly, this symphony.

Well, if nothing else, the first performance of the sketches for Elgar's Third Symphony, as elaborated by Anthony Payne, gave one old piece of received wisdom the thorough drubbing it deserved. For years we have been told that the surviving material for Elgar's last symphony is a sad testimony to the old composer's declining powers; not only is the original material pretty feeble, we've been informed, but there's actually very little of it. The rest is old ideas recycled, or skeletal scraps of ideas, undecipherable to anyone but the composer himself. The whole thing, it's said, has the look of a doomed project. After all, it was 20 years since Elgar had last written a symphony and almost as long since he had written anything substantial at all. By the end, surely even Elgar must have realised that be was stalling for time.

Wrong. Gloriously wrong. You don't have to look any further than the opening bars of the Third Symphony - brazen octaves and fifths, grinding in contrary motion - to realise that something special is happening here. Granted, the basic idea may derive from a sketch for the unfinished oratorio The Last Judgement, but then Elgar often refreshed himself creatively by reaching into his bottom drawer. And anyway the whole motif is transformed: an odd, distinctly un-Elgarian-looking figure becomes a theme



that fairly erupts with potential energy, capable of setting a huge, sweeping musical paragraph in motion. A little later, after Elgar's own beautifully engineered transition (is the equivalent passage in the Second Symphony quite as effective?), comes the "Second Subject": tender, lilting, in Elgar's best "feminine" vein - and completely original this time. Apparently this is another Elgarian love theme, inspired by a young admirer, the violinist Vera Hockman (the initials, "VH" stand next to the theme in one sketch). This long melody still haunts my memory - partly, I admit, because I had to play the sketch at the piano during the pre-concert talk I hosted with Anthony Payne; but also because it's so extraordinarily lovely. Feeble?! Now, just remember, count to 10...

It would be easy to go on listing glorious tunes, striking motifs or developments which Anthony Payne has derived from those evidently far from undecipherable sketches. All four movements seem crammed to bursting with memorable music. But there's a nagging question. Well, it doesn't exactly "nag" me, but I admit it's hard to answer.

Whose symphony is this? To give a reasonably straightforward answer, some of it is pure Elear, some of it is Elgar orchestrated or fleshed out, some of it is Elgar "guessed" or, more charitably, inferred - and some of it is pure Anthony Payne.

It would be wrong to call the Symphony "Elgar", and not just for moral reasons: there are passages where some of the pleasure derives from how like Elgar a development or a piece of orchestral colour is. But, confusingly, I feel that sensation just as strongly in the development theme of the first movement (which Payne has merely orchestrated) as in the coda of the finale (which he has completely composed). And, even knowing more or less bar-by-bar who did what, I honestly can't say that I experience the Symphony as the product of two minds, however well married. Putting that question to conductor Andrew Davis, who directed that memorable first run-through. I found his impression was exactly the same. This is very much "a work", even if you can't always say exactly whose work it is.

So is there an answer? For me, the clue comes in Payne's ending of the finale: a massive crescendo and diminuendo based on the finale's main theme – an idea that came to Payne quite spontaneously (during a sleepless night in an American hotel), but which he soon realised was roughly analogous to that vividly pictorial movement "The Wagon Passes" from The Nursery Suite. In the Symphony, as the music dies away, there's a flickering reference to the first movement's opening theme, then the final sound is a quiet stroke from gong and low harp, reverberating into nothing. Not everybody likes that final touch. "More like Mahler than Elgar" was one comment. For mc, it's like Tony Payne's signature - the aural equivalent of the Laus Deo ("Praise be to God") that Haydn used to write at the end of his scores. It's certainly in keeping with Payne's vision of what the piece is about - and without that vision, of course, there would be no "Third Symphony", only those much-misunderstood sketches.

"Vision" is truly the word. So much so that it makes me wonder if Payne isn't being a little over-modest in calling the Symphony simply an "elaboration" of Elgar's sketches. It is quite different from what, say, Deryck Cooke did with the sketch score of Mahler's 10th Symphony, or from Professor Brian Newbould's painstaking filling-out of the fragments of Schubert's numerous unfinished symphonies.

Payne is, after all, a composer - a composer saturated in 20th-century English

THE ELGAR PREMIERE

The first public performance of the

Elgar/Payne Symphony No 3 will be

given by the BBC SO, under

Andrew Davis, on Sun 15 Feb at

7.30pm in the RFH, SBC, London

romantic music. As his 1985 Proms commission The Spirit's Harvest showed, the works of Elgar, Vaughan Williams, George Butterworth and their contemporaries were among the sounds that first inspired him to compose. His earliest efforts were, he says. "pure English romantic". It is as a composer - not merely a musical detective - that he

Sir Edward Elgar (left, in 1919); a

page of sketches for his uncompleted.

symphony; and Anthony Payne, the

all to hear Eigar's Third Symphony

Photographs: Hulton Getty/Jim Four

composer who has finally allowed us

Section ...

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BIRTHS

MARIAG

has "elaborated" the sketches for Elgar's Third Symphony. This is a genuinely creative exercise, full of that "nature's fire" demanded by Robbie Burns; it couldn't be less like pastiche. In the interview we conducted before

that first, private performance last October, Payne described his mounting excitement as he realised that Elgar's material had a life of its own - that it was fully capable of suggesting its own developments. It was possible to take the ideas and transplant them, like seedlings, and watch them grow. That the process was as organic as that metaphor suggests is, I believe, reflected in the "work", the Elgar/Payne Symphony.

So, if this is a genuinely creative musical work, how does it fit into Anthony Payne's already extensive output? In my more fanciful moments. I have caught myself wondering if this wasn't what Payne was put or earth to do. But let's not write his epitaph just yet. As he said in that pre-concert talk, the experience of putting the Third Symphony together has made him think hard about the way he, and others, compose today. Perhaps we spend so much time and energy devising structures, processes, because we are incapable of creating basic material with the "life of its own" that Payne found among Elgar's sketches. If, in helping to create Elgar's Third Symphony, Anthony Payne has found the beginnings of a way back to classical Western thematic composition, it will be fascinating to see what he turns up. Until then, there's always this stirring - and eminently hummable - Symphony.



conversation between Anthony Payne, Andrew Davis and Stephen Johnson, will be broadcast on Radio

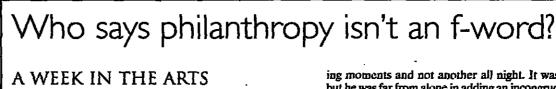
SEI (tel 017) 960 4242). It will also be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 at 7.30pm оп Мол 16 Feb. A recording of the first private performance, preceded by a

3 at 9.35pm on Tue 17 Feb.

The première recording of the work, together with a documentary disc featuring a commentary by Anthony Payne and performances of the original sketches, will be released by NMC Recordings (distributed by the Complete Record Co) on 15 Feb (NMC D053 and NMC D052 respectively).

NO CAPITALIST ***

IS GOING TO FXXX WITH



Clothing industry millionaire Peter Wolff is giving £1m to help young playwrights. It is one of the most generous pieces of philanthropy in the arts for some time. But the gift from the 67year-old self-made man, who once worked in the lingerie department at Marks & Spencer, comes with a notable caveat.

Mr Wolff does not want swearing or gratuitous sex and violence in the dramas he funds. He wants to help aspiring playwrights produce "middle of the road" drama, saving: "I want to find and help a group of playwrights to write good theatre without needing to put 20 f-s in it. So many people I know

are becoming reluctant to go to the theatre because there is so much filth and violence.

DAVID LISTER

Now there's a hell of a challenge, if Mr Wolff will pardon my language. Do we have a single young writer, or indeed a playwright of any age, who can craft a play without any swearing, sex or violence? Mr Wolff's offer conjures up for me a delightful vision of writers all over the country tearing up pages of drafts in exasperation as they struggle in

vain to master the long-forgotten skill of the f-less play, five-pound notes vanishing be-

"I tried." a despairing Mark Ravenhill might plead with Mr Wolff, tears rolling down his cheeks, "believe me, I tried. But Shopping and Sewing just dida't work."

Looking down the list of West End plays now on. I could find few that accord with Mr Wolff's wishes. Peter Pan certainly, but even there Captain Hook has a violent kink and Wendy's continual pleas for a kiss strike me as suspiciously gratuitous.

Not that Mr Wolff doesn't have a point. There is rather a lot of gratuitous swearing on stage. I recall that even Andrew Lloyd Webber's Sunset Boulevard had an f-word in the opening moments and not another all night. It was incongruous, but he was far from alone in adding an incongruous swear word for no particular reason, rather in the way that Hollywood filmmakers do (the real reason there being to gain a street-credworthy Certificate 15).

Yes, aesthetically, Mr Wolff might have a point. But he is wrong to put his money where his mouth is. Over the past decade of arts sponsorship, there have been constant cries of wolf (no pun intended) that a sponsor might try to influence the content of an artistic endeavour. It never really happened. Now it has, though this aspect has gone largely unnoticed in the publicity surrounding the generosity of Mr Wolff's gift.

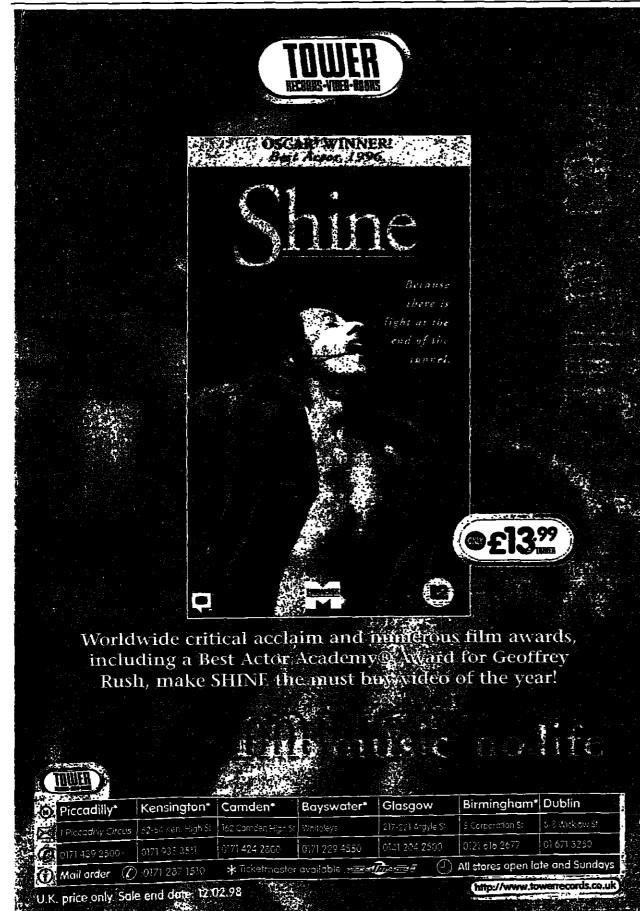
Constraints on writers do not produce good work. They produce a formulaic hack-job, "middle of the road" plays made to order (bring them back if they do not fit). Yes, occasional-

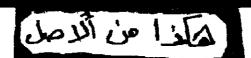
ly there is unwarranted swearing, sex and violence (though, on the West End stage, it's largely the first and very, very rarely the other two). But these are explorations in art for both writers and audiences. Where the language is relevant, it works; where it is not, audiences sooner or later stop coming, writers mature and

develop their style. I am sometimes worriedthat we are in danger of losing what Harold Pinter once called "an underground vo-

cabulary" if we have too much swearing. There is nothing to fall back on in genuine moments of verbal aggression. But let audience response determine what the public find relevant to their lives in drama, not the diktat of philanthropists. Mr Wolff is a generous man, and theatre should be grateful for his gift, but no strings, please.

Incidentally, it is striking that Mr Wolff cites as his own favourite playwrights David Hare, Tom Stoppard, Arthur Miller and David Marnet. David Marnet! Take away the swearing and sexual discussions in Mamet and you shorten the evening considerably. If Mamet had had a patron who had insisted that the young writer avoid those alleged sins, a great writer might





Haroun Tazieff

Haroum Tazieff, vulcanologist: born Warsaw II May 1914; Assistant Professor of Geology, University of Brussels 1950-52; Head of Research, Centre National de la Recharche Scientifique, France 1967-70, Director 1971-81; Secretary of State in the Prime Minister's Office for Prevention of Natural Disasters 1974-86; Mayor of Mirmande 1977-89; married 1952 Pauline de Ways-Ruart d'Elzius (deceased), 1958 France Depierre; died Paris 2 February 1998.

Tell any French citizen that you work on active volcanoes for a living, and their inevitable first question will be, "Do you know



Tazieff: nothing by halves

eff that everyone in the country knew who he was and what he did for a living. This might be expected for a politician or a celebrated actor, but for a as a geologist, first amongst the

earth sciences, it was quite in the steamy jungles of the Belextraordinary.

Tazieff reached this almost nature's most spectacular and terrifying phenomena and every French man, woman, and his breathtaking films of volcanoes in action.

Born in Poland in 1914, Tazieff spent his formative years - following the death of his father - with his mother in St Petersburg, and later in Belgium, where he studied geology and agriculture. Always fascinated sociated with it, Tazieff worked Haroun Tazieff?" Such was the scientist in a small - if rather snowy peaks of the French glamorous - branch of the Alps, and later - in the 1940s - against nature.

gian Congo. It was here at last that he discovered volcanoes. godlike status by taking one of and in them a natural phenomenon worth his attention.

It would be untrue to say that transporting it into the lives of Tazieff fell in love with volcanoes: rather he regarded them child - both through his books as the enemy. As a keen boxer and, more importantly, through and rugby player, Tazieff viewed volcanoes as he would an opposing fighter or team - as something to be overcome at all odds. Some fellow vulcanologists, and especially those with a more sobre and scientific bent, frowned upon this attitude, but it found favour and admiration in the hearts of his French compatriby the Earth and everything asagainst molten rock across the planet and viewed his ordeals somewhat in the light of France

mentary films gave the viewer ing gases; Tazieff on the other a real impression of the terrifying power of volcanic eruptions and the destruction they are capable of wreaking. The human interest in the films was inevitably provided by Tazieff himself as - apparently oblivi-

ous to any danger and for no ob-

vious reason - he placed

himself, time and time again, in incredibly dangerous positions on the rims of exploding craters, in the paths of lava flows, and in boats on the surfaces of acid crater lakes. Tazieff never did anything by halves and always had one eye on the camera throughout his long and active career. When a

summit of Mount Etna (Sicily)

For the first time, his docu- searcher to sample the escap- of 75,000 people from the hand led a major expedition, complete with sherpas and shiny reflective silver suits. Needless to say film of the team in action was shortly to be seen all over France encouraging another generation's interest in volcanoes and their However popular he was

with his countrymen as a whole, it would be wrong to imagine that Tazieff did not create ripples, or even rather large waves, wherever he went. During the 1976 volcanic crisis on the French Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, he argued violently with another great French earth scientist, Claude Allègre new crater opened up at the - correctly, as it turned out -

vicinity of the volcano. In 1980, just before the

biggest eruption in North America since 1912, he assured US citizens that Mount St Helens would not erupt any further. Following a submarine landslide off the south coast of France, Tazieff announced that the town of Nice could disappear into the sea at any moment, a prediction that led an irate mayor to describe Tazieff as "a photographer who specialises in volcanoes" - a serious putdown for a man who regarded himself very much as a scientist first and foremost

In his later years, Tazieff entered the political scene, becoming Secretary of State for the Prevention of Natural and in 1968, the UK sent a single reagainst the needless evacuation Technological Disasters in 1984.

He lacked, however, the guile and subtlety of a natural politician, and preferred the freedom that allowed him to speak his mind on all and every issue. According to Tazieff, global warming was an "outright in-vention" and the ozone holes had been around since the 1920s and had nothing to do with CFCs.

Perhaps the most surprising of Tazieff's remarks were reserved for his scientist compatriot Jacques Cousteau, whose stance against nuclear testing at sea he described as "imbecilic". Surprising, because - in the eyes of the French and many other avid followers of his films across the world - Haroun Tazieff was the Jacques Cousteau of volcanoes.

— Bill McGuire

Marian Kratochwil

Marian Kratochwil, artist: born Kosow, Poland 30 September 1906; married 1961 Kathleen Browne; died London 3 December 1997.

Marian Kratochwil was one of those artists of distinction, many but not all of foreign birth, for whom the English art establishment has had shamefully little time.

Like other Polish artists of his generation he made his escape in dangerous circumstances from occupied Europe and rejoined the Polish army in Scotland in 1940. After the Second World War his background and beliefs ruled out a return to his native country, and he arrived in London in 1947, more or less penniless.

There was nothing in that background to prepare him for the radical changes in art which marked the post-war period, or indeed those which had been brewing in Paris since the year of his birth, 1906. His classical education in philosophy, coupled with one-to-one study with an experienced painter and a methods of the old masters, resulted in distancing him equalpassed for academic painting in this country. It was not a comtortable situation to be in. but. or Kratochwil, comfort was

never the first consideration. Two women helped to rescue Kratochwil from the grimness of a penurious life in post-war London. One of them, the fine New Zealand painter Kathleen Browne, eventually became his wife. Together they ran a small art school in Chelsea until their retirement in 1979, when they moved to Hampstead. The other was also a painter, now not well enough remembered, Dame Ethel Walker, who recognised his talent and unusual

mind. When Kratochwil came to London she was already in her eighties and too old to help his career in the way she wished. When she died in 1951 she be-



A painstaking observer of rural life: drawing by Kratochwil of Polish peasants dancing, 1933

from the need to teach. It was many years before he could them. Some of the finest he gave

Kratochwil began his career vanishing rural life of eastern Poland, and his drawings of it are of great historical as well as aesthetic interest. He continued this fine graphic tradition with done in spare moments while in the Polish army, then with scenes of London life in the East End, and after 1956 in Spain.

Often his attention would focus on the ironies and humiliations of the human condition. From 1932 onwards he devel-

this legacy, but fashion had ture that David Bomberg passed Ethel Walker by, and her evinced in his landscapes of the paintings did not spare him Ronda district, or again with the celestial vision of El Greco at Toledo, a city he represented place the most important of in paintings that do no violence to the memory of his great to the Courtauld Institute in predecessor.

Marian Kratochwil's love affair with Spain, and with Toleas a painstaking observer of the do in particular, was fully reciprocated, and it is in the Museo de Santa Cruz in that city that the best collection of his work is now to be found. Spain, with its respect for continuity was sketches of Scottish weather prepared to give the foreigner wall space which neither Poland nor Britain allowed him.

In his last 10 years Kratochwil was engaged on a series of allegorical subjects, perhaps taking their departure from his many paintings of Don Quixote. They culminate in a large and Kratochwik commanding

ternational financier, 68; Dr June

self-determination to learn the queathed him a large number oped his oils technique, to the complex painting which seems respondent. He was wholly unof paintings, believing that by point where he could justly to represent the worldly powers affected by ideas of political selling them he could buy time represent the Spanish land- contemplating their apocalypse, correctness, or by a sense of cialised in Gothic art history. A ly from modernism and from to paint. Kratochwil felt a strong scape, say, with the ferocious surely one of the most curious modernist evolution in art. His contemporary remembers her the feeble productions that sense of responsibility towards concentration on its rocky struct and unusual canvases to be discourse drew on his education as intellectually tough, benefitpainted in recent years, which was still on his easel a year ago. but is now on permanent display in Granada.

Even in old age, Marian Kratochwil was a commanding figure of impressive size, a fervent talker and prodigious cor-



and extensive reading, not without nostalgia, but fixed always on two topics that he thought were completely interdependent - humanity and art.

With the help of devoted friends he and Kathleen maintained their Hampstead home in the teeth of old age and infirmity. A few years ago he unexpectedly found himself in a position to do as he had longed to do and publish a study of Kathleen Browne (who survives him), which in its turn throws light on his own character, and is written with understanding and the tender gallantry of a distant age. Conversely, he bitterly regretted not being able to clear away the cloud of oblivion he felt had fallen on his late patroness, Ethel Walker.

Jill Allibone

Jill Spencer Rigden, architectural historian; born Abadan, Persia 26 April 1932; married 1957 David Allibone (three daughters); died Tunbridge Wells, Kent 3 February 1998.

The architectural historian Jill Allibone was the biographer of the Victorian architects Anthony Salvin and George Devey and an active and campaigning vice-chairman of the Victorian Society in the 1980s.

She was born Jill Rigden in 1932 in Abadan, Persia, where her father, Horace Walter Rigden, managed the Anglo-Persian oil refinery. Much of her childhood was spent in Persia (now Iran), where her father remained in charge throughout the Second World War, though she was evacuated to South Africa, With this international background, it is interesting that when she returned to live in her father's county, Kent, she developed all the passion of a native for that part of England.

After Godolphin School, Salisbury, she went to St Martin's School of Art, and in 1954 to the Courtauld, where she speing from the intensive tutorial system then in place, which was so daunting that of the dozen students who started the year only six finished.

Despite getting married in her last year and doing her Finals already pregnant, she got a sufficiently good degree to enable her to return after the birth of three daughters to do a PhD. She and her solicitor husband, David Allibone, bought a 1920 Arts and Crafts house with a large garden in Kent, which became the centre of a very happy family life.

For her thesis, she chose Anthony Salvin, one of the most important of the early Goths. who worked for a large number of royal and aristocratic patrons, restoring medieval castles in a witty and scholarly manner.

her supervisor Sir Nikolaus Peysner, one of the pioneering writers who in the 1950s awoke the British to their valuable and fast-disappearing legacy of Victorian buildings, and who was the first chairman of the Victorian Society, founded in 1958.

The work on Salvin and Pevsner's advocacy together enlisted Allibone's support for the society, which campaigns to save threatened buildings of the 19th and early 20th centuries, and for the next 30 years her enthusiasm and businesslike approach were to be of enormous benefit. She was a hard-working committee member, never afraid to fight for a cause or a building in which she believed. Moreover, as a former secretary of the society said, while there were always plenty of members who would point out what needed doing, Jill Allibone would do something herself to help.

Her doctoral thesis was published in 1987, as Anthony Salvin, Pioneer of Gothic Revival Architecture 1799-1881, an exhaustive study of a very successful practitioner, responsible amonest other things for Harlaxton Manor in Lincolnshire (1831-38), and the restoration in 1854-65 of Alnwick Castle for the Duke of Northumberland. In 1990, she combined two

of her enthusiasms, in George Devey: Architect 1820-1886, an account of an architect who adapted the traditional Kentish Wealden style for his buildings. thus creating an authentic vernacular style. A number of these were in Kent, including Betteshanger Manor (1856-82). and additions to Walmer Castle (1871-72), but his extensive practice also included Ascott House in Buckinghamshire (1870-84) for Leopold de Rothschild and Killarney House in Kerry for Lord Kenmare (1877-79). She catalogued the Devey drawings for the British Architectural Library, and wrote the catalogue. Her interest in both architecture and the law came together in the essays she contributed to The Inns of Court (1996), to accompany - Douglas Hall She was fortunate in having as photographs by Helène Binet.



Despite her roles as architectural historian and devoted mother and grandmother, for over 20 years Jill Allibone was a member of the South Westminster Bench. A fellow JP remembers her as a "fiercely independent colleague with a somewhat forbidding manner", but whose procedure was always correct, and her dealines with those in the dock both tough and fair. Behind this sometimes uncompromising exterior was a woman of many interests and enthusiasms, which she would always share with colleagues, whether on the Bench or as architectural historians, devoted to her family, her dogs, and an equally formidable parrot.

To her work she added two other enthusiasms, for the countryside and buildings of Kent, where she was a member of the Kent Buildings Preservation Trust, and recently for an endangered building type - the mausoleum. On a visit to a family grave in Whitstable, Kent, she was struck by the condition of a magnificent tomb, designed by Charles Barry junior in 1875, for Wynn Ellis, a major benefactor to the National Gallery. This led her to look seriously at the plight of these architecturally significant monuments, often erected by families which had since disappeared. With other architectural historians she set up a charitable Mausolea and Monuments Trust, finally constituted in 1997, which now owns and preserves some six of these monuments. - Hermione Hobhouse

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

BELL To Noeleen (nee Burns) and Andrew, a daughter, Anna Victoria, on Wednesday 4 February 1998, a sister for Elizabeth, Joseph and Theresa.

Announcements for BIRTHS, MAR-RIAGES & DEATHS should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The In-dependent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London EH 5DL, telephoned to 8171-293 2011 or faced to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Lectures TODAY

National Gallery: Jacqueline Ansell, "Hearts and Flowers (1): Homborst, Elizabeth Smart, Queen of Bohemia", 12om. Victoria and Albert Museum: Emma Taylor, "Forty Years of Paris Couture 1925 to 1965", 2.30pm.

TOMORROW National Portrait Gallery: John Cooper, "Two Portraits by Kneller. Mariborough and Lord Oxford",

Changing of the Guard TODAY: The Household Cavairy Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, Ham. TO-MORROW: The Household Cavairy Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, Ham; F Company Scots Guards mounts the Owen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, hand provided by the Cold-

Birthdays

TODAY: Mrs Gillian Banks, policy consultant, Age Concern, England. 65; Lord Bellwin, former government. minister, 75; Mr Eddie Bracken, film actor, 78; Mr David Brighty, ambassador to Spain. 59; Miss Dora Bryan, actress, 74; The Earl of Corkers writer, artist and broadand Orrery, writer, artist and broad-caster, 88; Mr Gerald Davies, rugby footballer, 53; The Earl of Harewood former operatic managing director, 75; Mr Gareth Hunt, actor, 55; Mr Ian Jack, Editor, Granta, 53; The Hon Peter Jay, writer and broadcaster, 61; Lord Keith of Kinkel, former Lord of Appeal in Ordinary. 76; Sir John Leahy, former High Commissioner in Australia, 70; Dr Barbara McGibbon, pathologist, 70; Sir George Moseley, former senior civil servant, 73: Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, chairman, Kinglisher, 56; Sir Philip Myers, former HM Insperior of Constabulary, 67; Mr Roy Watson, former Director-General, National

TOMORROW: Professor Averil Cameron, Warden, Keble College, Oxford, 58; Miss Rachel Cusk, author, 31; Professor David Daube, Emeritus Regius Professor of Civil Law, Oxford University, 89; Mr Osian Ellis, harpist, 70; Marshal of the RAF Sir John Grandy, 85; Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton, 83; Lady Howe of Aberavon, Chairman, Broadcasting Standards Com-mission, 66: Lord Jakobovits, former Chief Rabbi, 76; Ms Jenny Jones MP, 52: Professor Ann Lambton, Persian scholar, 80; Mr Murray Lawrence, former chairman of Lloyd's, 63; Mr Jack Lemmon, film actor, 73: Sir Francis McWilliams, former Lord Mayor of London, 72; Sir Kenneth Maddocks, former overseas administrator, 91; Mr John F. Martin, High Commissioner to Malawi, 55; Mr Alexander Papamarkou, in-

conductor, 66. **Anniversaries** Theodore of Heraclea. Fermers' Union, 72.

Paterson-Brown, former Chief Com-missioner, Girl Guides, 66; Lord Rayne, chairman, London Merchant Securities, 80; Sir Richard Southern, former President, St John's College, Oxford, 86; The Rev Dr John Tudor, Development Officer, Harris Manchester College, Oxford, 68; Mr John Williams, composer and

TODAY: Births: St Thomas More 1478; Sir James Augustus Henry Murray, editor of the Oxford New English Dictionary, 1837. Deaths: Ann Radcliffe (Ward), novelist, 1823; Adolphe Sax, inventor of the saxophone, 1894. On this day: Edward of Caernaryon (later King Edward II) was created Prince of Wales, 1301. Today is the Feast Day of St Adaucus, St Luke the Younger, St Moses. St Richard, "king", St Silvin and St

TOMORROW: Births: John Ruskin, writer, artist and art critic, 1819; Jules Verne, novelist, 1828; James Dean (James Byron), actor, 1931. Deaths: Mary, Queen of Scots, be-headed 1587; Robert Michael Ballantyne, author of books for boys 1894. On this day: the Great Frost of London ended, 1740. Tomorrow is the Feast Day of St Cuthman, St Eifleda, St Jerome Emiliani, St John of Matha, St Meingold, St Nicetius or Nizier of Besançon and St Stephen

St Matthew's Church, Cambridge

St Matthew's Church, Cambridge, is holding a reunion weekend on 25/26 July 1998. Former members please telephone 01223 363545 or 316916 for details, by 30 April.

FAITH & REASON

Now ghosts are more popular than God

Why is belief in the paranormal rising despite Britain's supposed scientific rationalism? Because, argues Andrew Brown, it offers the illusion of control in a world which seems increasingly

One of the oddest and least predicted facts about the last 50 years has been the inexorable rise of superstition. At a time when the whole world has been transformed by modern science (and in the places where that transformation is most complete) there is an almost complete rejection of the foundational beliefs of scientific rationality. This has not, as we all know, led to any resurgence in traditional religion or even what you might call traditional miracles. What has grown up instead is a mishmash of private beliefs, jostling uneasily together like ice floes on a chilly sea of ignorance. A newspaper poll this week suggested that far more people now be-

heve in ghosts, or ESP, than go to church. Most of the explanations for this

religious; both of whom incline to to be the same words, by asking how blame credulity of the masses. "When people do not believe in God, they do not believe in nothing, they believe in anything," said Chesterton, and this is a remark less profound than it is generally taken to be. As an analysis, it doesn't carry us much further than the socio-biologists' contention that people are born gullible and will believe anything their parents tell them and never think thereafter. How tough-minded socio-biologists have evolved from such a mass of credulity is never property explained, of course.

I think it is more useful to ask what needs these beliefs are fulfilling. Obviously it is wrong to choose beliefs that are repugnant to truth simply because they make us feel better: but people who reason this far seldom go on to consider that bizarre and irrational beliefs, if they persist, must not only make people feel better, but not clash too violently with the truth, or possibly express truths which seem peripheral to what they are ostensibly about.

To take a simple example: many people believe that the end of the world is imminent, and foretold by prophecy. None the less, we can and should disphenomenon have come from the dis- criminate among these beliefs even turn in which people were asked

they function in the lives of the people who hold them. The same belief can carry the message that the world is ultimately manageable and will turn out for the best, or that it is all hopeless and the best policy is suicide. There is a celebrated study of apocalyptic belief among the technicians who look after American nuclear missiles, which found that believing in the imminent divinely planned end of the world helped them to manage their anxieties about preparing for it - and so, probably made it less likely to happen, at least by accident, On the other hand, the followers of the Golden Temple Order, who also believe they will be raptured up to heaven in the skies, think it necessary to kill themselves first, and this minor doctrinal point has considerable practical consequences.

One of the important things about the surge of paranormal belief is how few consequences and costs it has. This is not immediately apparent. When people say they believe in astrology or in farot predictions, we are tempted to assume that they do so when these contradict other evidence. But of course Is it more dishonest to do so with they don't. There was a survey last au- horoscopes or news stories?

overwhelmingly they said they did. Would they base decisions on it? Overwhelmingly they would not.

So there is a sort of reasonableness behind this, even if it is the rationality of the emotions, responding to their own needs. But this sudden surge of emotional anarchy is surely on one level a response to the emotional emptiness of modern economic life. Individuals don't matter in a modern economy. That is what makes it so successful and at the same time so unsatisfying.

The paranormal, by contrast, offers a constantly shifting set of perspectives in which individuals matter, and the fluidity is part of its charm. It is like ambient music. As soon as you have gone through reading toes, you are on to homeopathy for cats, or feng shui. None of these relates to each other; none pretends to offer a coherent view of the universe; but all provide the central illusion that what we do makes a difference to the universe. Newspapers should not sneer at this too much, since the most successful ones are exactly those which convince their readers that they and their prejudices matter.

gruntled losers: the scientists and the when they are expressed in what seem whether they believed in astrology - • 'Faith & Reason' is edited by Paul Vallely

There is already an entitlement to privacy, and Irvine is right to enforce it



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It is time to come to the defence of Lord Irvine. The Lord Chancellor was pilloried this week for suggesting that journalists should be prevented by law from printing the facts of a cabinet minister's affair. The knee-jerk condemnation heaped upon his wig almost entirely avoided the important question: was he right? What is more, he was gleefully traduced for having "hlundered", "gaffed" and spoken out

Let us get a few things straight. Derry Irvine's alleged mistake was to have answered a question put to him by a iournalist. He was asked how entrenching the right to privacy of the European Convention on Human Rights in British law would have affected the case of Robin Cook and his secretary. It was a serious question and he gave a serious answer. He did not pause to think, "I wonder what the tabloids will make of this?" It is hypocritical, therefore, for those who bemoan politicians' unwillingness to engage in intelligent and open public debate to accuse Lord Irvine of lacking "political judgement".

It was not only journalists who were unfairly critical. Indeed, it was the Prime Minister's official spokesman who turned a small "Irvine gags press" story into a big "Blair slaps down mentor" story. Of course, as the spokesman repeated yesterday, the timing of Lord Irvine's remarks was not helpful. Good. We want more politicians capable of answering questions at times when the spin doctors do not want them asked, even if their answers take them "off message".

Much of the press reaction to the Lord Chancellor's interview was, in any case, based on a misunderstanding. He talked of strengthening the rules on privacy operated by the Press Complaints Commission (PCC), with a power to impose fines of up to £10,000. Far from increasing the scope of the law; this was specifically intended to avert the need for the courts to rule on issues of privacy.

The fact is that we have a privacy law

already, called Article 8 of the European Convention. This sets out the right to respect for "private and family life", including one's home and correspondence, which must not be interfered with by "public authorities". Although the convention does not give individuals the power to enforce this right to privacy against the media directly, there is an obligation on regulatory bodies such as the PCC, even if they are not government agencies. And there is a more general obligation on government itself to safeguard the right to



Lord Irvine is about to make this right more tangible by making it enforceable in British courts, rather than requiring citizens to turn to Strasbourg. That is strongly supported by this newspaper and almost the entire spectrum of liberal opinion. It is odd, therefore, that some liberai commentators are the most exercised by the alleged imposition of statutory controis on a free press.

The Lord Chancellor may not have been wise to talk so casually of the PCC devising a mechanism of "prior restraint" to stop newspapers before they publish something which is an unjustified invasion of privacy. The phrase is as old and as sacred as the idea of freedom of the press, which, according to Blackstone in 1765, "consists in laying no previous restraints upon publications, and not in freedom from censure for criminal matter when published".

However, as David Aaronovitch pointed out in these pages yesterday, this is not a principle which should be elevated to theology. There is little point in having a right to privacy if you can enforce it only after the damage has been done. But prior restraint is something which should only be considered, as with injunctions for libel, in cases where there is an overwhelming public-interest argument against publication.

This is where Lord Irvine did stray into error. He said that the PCC should have ordered the News of the World not to report the Foreign Secretary's affair. Now, it would be right to argue that a newspaper should not have published the story. We

do not think that it is right for photographers to stake out someone's flat in order to obtain proof of marital infidelity. Lord Irvine asked, rhetorically: "What public interest is there in disclosing that?" At the time of publication, there was none. Although, when it emerged that Mr Cook had sacked his diary secretary and thought about appointing Gaynor Regan in her place, a kind of posthumous case could be made.

But there is a larger issue. We may disapprove of what the News of the World did, but that is not the same as saying that it should be prevented by law from doing it. In the scale of human rights, that of privacy (Article 8) should be balanced by that of freedom of expression (Article 10). If the Case of the Foreign Secretary's Secretary had been tested against the European Convention, free speech would weigh heavier than privacy. Lord frvine even admitted that the courts would be unlikely to grant an injunction in favour of any public figure" - in which case, why did he think the PCC should impose pri-

or restraint? On this point Lord Irvine may have been wrong, but the argument is finely balanced, difficult and important. He should be praised rather than vilified for engaging

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Iragi crisis

Before we work ourselves into a war mindset over the undoubted dangers presented by Iraq, it might be advisable to consider some wider aspects of the situation.

First, both the United Kingdom and the United States are signatories to the 1977 Protocols to the Geneva Conventions. The Protocols expressly forbid the bombardment of installations containing hazardous substances. Second, it would seem unwise to risk sending a cascade of nerve gases or anthrax spores into the environment with massive attacks of high explosive.

are much better alternatives. FREDERICK STARKEY Mold, Clwyd

Your leading article ("When it comes to welfare, the special relationship offers a lesson in failure", 6 February) supports military action against Iraq "if it is justified in international law". International law says that no state has the right to alter the domestic political arrangement of other states through overt military means (UN Declaration, 1970).

would be justifiable if it had the full backing of the UN Security Council. But in the absence of a consensus on the Security Council favouring the use of force, the impending air strikes on Iraq would not only violate international law, but would also add substance to the oftrepeated accusation that the UN is merely an instrument of Anglo-American domination. RANDHIR SINGH BAINS Gants Hill, Essex

US intentions have been clear stable market for their products, affairs of other countries.

In each case, Britain has been disposed to lend a hand and to ask few questions. (Last year, Gore Vidal referred to the United Kingdom as "the Americans' favourite aircraft carrier"). It seem to matter little how brutal the policy; the US maintains

As we appear to be on the eve of another attack on Iraq we must hope that the threat is a real threat, that it will truly make the world a safer place, and that Britain is not just another cog in the machine. ADRIAN K HALL

What is emerging from the Iraqi crisis is the general acceptance, at face value, of the American and British governments' allegations about Iraq.

Such mass-killing weapons as chemical and biological agents should be got rid of, and Unscom has evidently done much. But it has always been the case, consequences of warlike acts are incalculable. Bombing Iraq again would not be clever; there

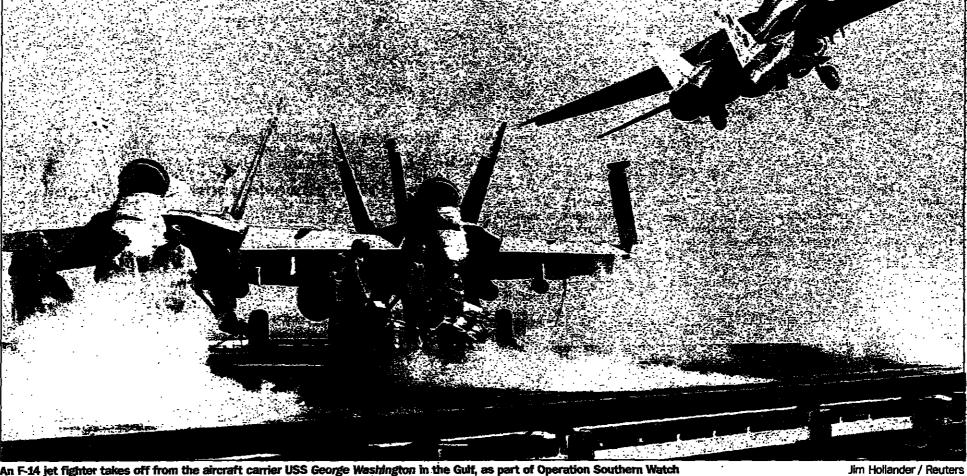
Military action against Iraq Made the Gulf War, January 1996). However, the damage

for many years: the creation and maintenance of a large and especially in the lucrative arms sector. They have achieved this by creating imaginary enemies. minor wars and Nato, and by playing around in the domestic

its allies in western Europe.

Madrid

reduces insulin production by the pancreas, affects thyroid and kidney functions, increases the infant mortality rate in under-



An F-14 jet fighter takes off from the aircraft carrier USS George Washington in the Gulf, as part of Operation Southern Watch

Prior to the 1991 Gulf War, causes brittle teeth. two reports were circulated which created great hostility towards Iraq, to the extent of making public opinion supportive of waging a ruthless war. The first story was about Iraq amassing troops and tanks on the Kuwait/Saudi border in preparation for an attack on Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter. The second story was about Iraqi soldiers seizing incubators from a Kuwaiti hosswallow. pital and discarding the babies. MAUREEN MADDOCK A few years later, both stories were proven to be untrue (Channel Four, The Lies That

Risks from fluoride

had already been done.

RNADHMI

London SW6

Dental health is improving in Britain, yet only 10 per cent of people drink fluoridated water, so it is clear that fluoride in water is not necessary ("Fluoride

fear condemns children to tooth decay", 5 February). Mass medication through our public water supply is a very dangerous precedent. Most European countries have banned fluoride in their water supplies due to health and safety fears. There is strong scientific evidence that fluoride causes many health problems - it weakens the immune system, it is linked to increased cancer death rates and osteosarcoma rates in young males, and increased hip fractures rates, it adversely af-Post letters to Letters to the Editor fects genes and chromosomes,

Natural fluoride is different to the "artificial" fluoride put in water - even so, in areas where it occurs naturally to a significant degree, there are health problems. Artificial fluoride is a waste product of the steel and fertiliser industries and requires safe storage and disposal. Even fluoridated toothpaste carries a warning not to

If the parents in your case studies (5 February) have heard about fluoridation of water and take their children for regular dental check-ups, how come they haven't heard of fluoride tablets? This leaves the choice and responsibility of fluoride consumption with the parents which, in my opinion, is where it belongs. ANI HARRIS

High Peak, Derbyshire

Aims of BBC drama

How distressing to see Michael Wearing, the head of BBC drama serials, forced to resign over the increased use of American-style focus groups at the BBC (report, 6 February). As one who conducts over 100 such groups a year, for a whole variety of clients, I know their limitations as well as their ad-

Group discussions, as we sacks by special command of

and include a daytime telephone number.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk

E-muil correspondents are asked to give a postal address.

nourished populations and also call them, are a great way to find out what viewers think and feel in detail and depth; but are not a substitute for artistic judgement. Had group discussions ex-

isted in Shakespeare's day, I expect the ending of Romeo and Juliet would have been changed. We all want to see BBC drama that is aimed at both minorities and majorities, which pushes forward the boundaries as well as reflecting current preferences. That is why the BBC must not be afraid of taking artistic risks, but at the same time lis-

> JUDITH WARDLE London SE5

> > The first black peer?

tening to viewers' opinions.

Carl Jackson (letter, 5 February) may be right to include Baroness Flather and Lord Chitnis in the category of "black"; but the actual skin colour of most people whose ancestors originated from the

sists on describing us as black (and some of us love it), then the first Indian to be created a peer was Sir Satyendra Sinha, who became Under-Secretary of State for India and was raised to the peerage of the United Kingdom in 1919. Indians had actually "sat" in the House of Lords before that; for example, the deposed ruler of the Punjab, Maharajah Duleep Singh, was scated on one of the wool-

Asian sub-continent is brown. However, if Carl Jackson in-

that's where the problem is. So is the drought over? In terms of rainfall, yes. But in terms of the amount of water available for public supplies. we'll only really know the answer to that in April. PAMELA TAYLOR Chief Executive

ceremonial occasion. But he was

GEORGE CHOWDHARAY-

End of the drought

The water industry has no wish

to be a labelled a "prophet of

gloom" (report, 4 February), but

is it really surprising that it's still

cautious about the prospects for

Of the 17 companies repre-

sented by the Water Companies

Association, seven rate their un-

derground supplies as low, two

are restricting the use of hosepipes and sprinklers, and six be-

lieve substantial rainfall over the

next two months is needed.

Yes, surface reservoirs are fuller

than normal but in East Anglia,

up to 50 per cent of water

comes from underground - and

the UK's water supplies?

outside it.

London SW3

The Water Companies Association London SW1 Sir: One good thing about the

water shortage was that it had begun to remind us of the value of natural resources we had been taking for granted. Should we now resume throwing that idea out with the bath water? PÉTER LANYON Leiston, Suffolk

Queen Victoria in 1854, on a Food fights

not a member of the House; and By elevating personal experithe woolsacks are, in any event, ence to universal truth, Kathy Harvey ("Give me fish fingers strictly speaking, regarded as again and again", 4 February) perpetuates the myth that children are naturally fussy and reluctant eaters, and that refusing to eat is somehow "normal".

Some families treat a shared meal as a pleasure, both because it is a sociable occasion and because they like eating. The children generally enjoy their food, but if on a particular occasion they do not feel like eating what is offered, they are free to leave it, and it is no big deal. They are not pleaded with, cajoled or ordered to eat: eating is a normal response to their own hunger, and not something done to

please others. Others (or "every parent", as Kathy Harvey would have it) treat eating as an unfortunate necessity, to be foisted on unwilling children by stealth (eg toddlers fed amidst a circus parade of distracting toys), threats or bribery. The children, understandably, come to view everything put on their plate with deep suspicion, and to take a certain pleasure in the ritual games played out each time they push it away.

Parents need to realise that they are free to choose which group they join. **PAUL STYLES**

JOANNA GOYDER

Fear of tax forms

I was delighted when the Inland Revenue moved to selfassessment because it seemed to give the opportunity, for the first time, to get a correct

Our national bear

The Labour backbencher Gwyneth Dunwoody should be commended for drawing our attention to the plight of the Pooh Five (report, 6 February). Personally, however, I'd be happy to let New York keep the stuffed toys in return for the removal from our television screens of the indescribable Americanised Disney cartoon version of our national bear. MARK WILSON

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CHIEF?

Winnie-the-Pooh and friends are in for a shock should they return to this country if, as your headline suggests ("A scandal that would rock Seven Acre Wood"; 6 February), what was once the 100 Acre Wood has shrunk to a mere seven acres. Is this yet another example of the intolerable pressures on our countryside? MARK BURGESS

Taunton, Somerset

Free dome I was a 20-year-old working boy at the time of the Festival of Britain in 1951 (letter, 3 February) and, although I went to the site several times and enjoyed the free attractions, I was never able to afford the dome. This time, since it is the people's money that is building the Millennium Dome, why cannot we all get in free? LOUIS LAWRENCE

Ventnor, Isle of Wight

Rowton, Cheshire

Short memories than the previous tax return New Labour spent £1.5m on an advertising campaign aimed at . addressing the recruitment crisis in teaching, with the slogan "No one forgets a good teacher". The announcement on pay (report, 30 January) would suggest the Government has done just that. PETER G WARD

QUOTE UNQUOTE

assessment of my tax liabilities

without continual arguments

The form was not impossi-

ble to complete. It did require

a little thought, but no more

form. The example given in your

report "A paper-chasing, form-

filling nightmare" (29 January)

suggests that inertia and fear

have been the greatest problems

are with the Inland Revenue.

My sympathies, for once,

in meeting the deadline.

Wokingham, Berkshire

I R SMART

with my local inspector.

My job is to be noble and fine - Clare Short, Secretary of State for Overseas Development

Before Blair tries to suck up to the IRA by apologising for Bloody Sunday, shouldn't the IRA apologise for the bloody Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday they have inflicted on the people of this country? - Lord Tebbit, Tory peer

Some young writers cannot get their work produced if they don't set out to shock. And so many people I know are reluctant to go to the theatre because there is so much filth and violence - Peter Wolff, philanthropist

Ever since my daughter was born, I feel the fleetingness of time, and I don't want to waste it on getting the perfect lip. colour - Madonna, pop singer

The worst career move any tyrant can make is to soften the regime - George Walden, former Tory minister

It is an Opposition of trivial pursuits, frankly, at the moment - Tony Blair

I was writing my PhD thesis on reduced dimensionality in molecular representation when we decided to write the tackiest, glitziest film instead - Torn Barlow, o research fellow at Balliol, Oxford, who co-wrote a screenplay for the movie

The Scottish people will one day become extinct - John Vincent, historian, on the Scots' falling birthrate

..... [3

with ioning, be-

Lottery tickets, golf balls and gold fillings – finders keepers



DAVID **AARONOVITCH** IN PURSUIT OF LOST PROPERTY

It is hardly surprising that the family of Juan Villasante Paz were not paying attention when - 10 days ago - the draw was made for Spanish national lottery. For, two hours earlier, the 76-year-old Galician retired roadsweeper had had a heart attack and popped his clogs. Within the week his niece, Maria Antonia Alonsa, and the other family members, had buried their elderly relative in his

Only when the story emerged that the winning ticket had not been produced, and the £2m had not been claimed, did the grieving relatives realise that the outstanding numbers matched those drawn by the deceased man. In which case his ticket, wherever it might be, was now the passport to vast riches. But

Leisurely searches through the old man's small dwelling must have become ever more frantic, as the ticket failed to be found. It was not in the chest of drawers. It was not inside an empty biscuit tin in the larder. It was not under the mattress. It was not even in the pockets of any of his clothes. Or wasn't it? There was, of course, they realised, one suit no one had looked in. And that was buried under six feet of Galician soil.

It must have been a painful moment for the appalled family - none of them wealthy - when it dawned upon them that, if they were to enjoy the fruits of Providence, they would first have to exhume Uncle Juan. As I write, their application for this spot of Juanupmanship is still under consideration.

But this raises an important legal and moral question. Can it be said that proceeds of the subterranean ticket, even if they do manage to retrieve it, actually belong to them? Can the money be part of the estate of Mr Villasante Paz, given that he died before the winning ticket was actually drawn?

Consider the situation had Juan thinking himself a man of modest means left a will stating that his house, say, and most of his money should go to Maria Antonia, and that the residue (which he believed to be nearly nothing) should be given to her evil (and fictional) sister Fortunata. If the residue now contains the winnings from the ticket, Fortunata will be a wealthy woman, free to indulge her dark

and expensive Galician whims. Bank that one, and let us now return to Britain and to Stafford Crown Court. where, this week, a landmark judgment was made concerning the ownership of another kind of lost treasure - golf balls. The suit centred on a series of "water hazards" (a generic golfing term for ponds, lakes and puddles) in which the more inept golfers at the Branston Golf and Country Club were continually losing their golf balks.

Twice a year, the court heard, the professional golfers and caddies at the club dredged the hazards - as they were entitled to do by virtue of the club's rules - retrieved the balls and sold them in the club shop at 50p a throw.

This happy arrangement was recently disrupted by two enterprising Leeds men, Gary Thewlis and Philip Rzonca, who descended upon the club at dead of night dressed in wetsuits, gathered up the balls. and set off back for home. A policemen intercepted them, and discovered their booty in the back of the car. They were arrested and charged with theft. The golf club confidently expected conviction and restitution of their purloined property.

Amazingly the judge thought otherwise. Judge Simon Tonking advised the jury that "property which has been abandoned cannot be stolen". He continued - even more extraordinarily -"if property has not been abandoned, but a defendant genuinely believed that it had, that defendant cannot be convicted of theft." The jury agreed and Messrs Thewlis and Rzonca were acquitted.

Finally our tour takes us to Montpellier, in the South of France, where a number of local gravediggers were this week charged with the theft - over 15 years - of thousands of pounds worth of gold fillings, jewellery and clothing from corpses buried in the Saint-Lazare cemetery. One of the disgraced men was found to have one pound or more of dental gold in his house. Most of their loot was procured when bodies were being exhumed, after the leases on plots had expired.

The Montpellier miscreants must hope that their case is heard before the French equivalent of Judge Tonking. For if leaving gold in a holefor eternity is not abandonment of property, then God knows what is. Under the Tonking rules there would not be the slightest chance of conviction. And the same fear must surely impel

the family of Juan Villasante Paz to speedy action. For all I know Mr Thewlis or Mr Rzonca may be purchasers of The Independent, and even are now to be counted among the millions of readers poring, as you do, over these words. Even now they may making calls to Spain, or calling up "Galician Cemeteries" on the Internet. For if the lottery ticket has been abandoned - and may be claimed by the man who holds it - the investment in two second-class seats to Bilbao, a pickaxe, a spade and a lantern will seem small by comparison with the riches that await. Fortunata, beware!

Monica Lewinsky was not America's only intern – what do the rest do?

ALISSA QUART UNPAID AND UNEQUAL

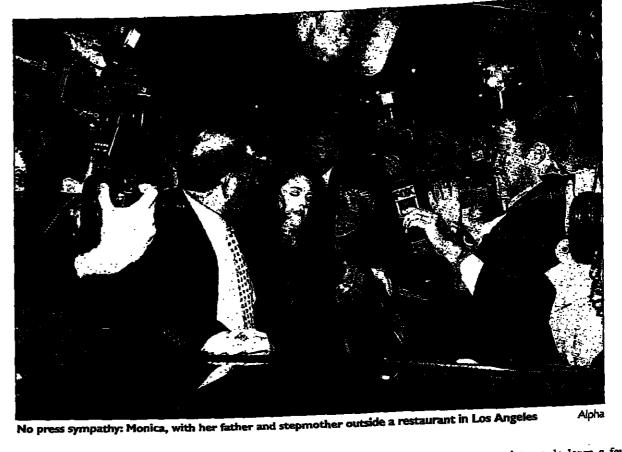
The White House sex scandal has put Monica Lewinsky in the news with many unsavoury appellations - not the least of them "former White House intern". As the nation's most famous intern, Lewinsky is like the thousands of the other post-teen inhabitants of America's bottom work rung a paradox of powerlessness and privilege.

Despite the gilded cage in which she is now trapped, I "feel the pain" of the former intern. Or rather, I've felt that pain, as both an intern and a 'girl". As an intern (in New York City), I've read out loud the daily newspaper followed by an alphabetised list of phone calls, while my "boss" received his in-office massage. And I've watched others experience far more miserable and hapless bouts doing the middle-class slave labour euphemised as

"interning". President Clinton's 24year-old alleged paramour radiates a spoiled sort of vulgerability. In her 1995 White House internship, she was an unpaid assistant serving the Beltway's power élite. Of course, she was also an indulged doctor's daughter, wealthy enough to labour without remuneration. It's the combination of pampered pre-adultness and humiliating insignificance that has contributed to the lack of sympathy for her in the press. Her intern status makes her an even tackier joke, as evidenced in accounts of her adolescent stay at a weight-loss camp and her parents' Southern California divorce settlement which included the cost of her ther-

According to people who of interns (ie worker trainees) are college students, and 50 to 60 per cent of them work for nothing. Clean, assured, often bearing degrees from fancy liberal arts colleges, the uncompensated apprentice usually learns, over the course of her (or his) internship, some very important life lessons. Like how to sit still, how to order bottled water, how to kowtow to highers-up and perhaps how to sabotage office culture - which is part of how to navigate it (one intern I know spent his research hours racking up calls to sex services on the company's dime).

I've heard of young women



getting asked on dates, in awe of 40-year-old editors with balding pates and a suspicious mastery of the slang of their intern's generation. I've also seen young men quickly exchange their student sycophancy for a more advanced,

clean-shaven toadyism.

Lewinsky's legally a woman but she is known as a "girl" by the press. In her case, the link between her appellations "girl" and "ex-intern" are hardly coincidental. The mixture of vulnerability and special attention associated with being power with their young unpaid female employees." As a safeguard against that imbalance, ABC News has all its interns watch a video about harassment in the workplace. Economic exploitation of interns is more common than boss-to-intern sexual harassment. Intem-tormenting is so common a pursuit, it appears in Scott Adams popular comic strip of

office culture, Dilbert. Yet internship literature, from guidebooks to newspapers, usually presents internships as "learning experiences". and has an extensive application. White House interns answer correspondence from constituents. Some get to work on the White House Web site.

Uncompensated work is effective at one thing: helping the professional class to reproduce itself. Who else but rich kids can afford to work in stylish companies for nothing? Part of the sweaty bargain of the intern economy is that once the adult paid job is obtained, the intern gets to forget her hours of prior servility. But Monica Lewinsky, the per-

deflating life stage. Let her case

bring attention to the decrepi-

ternships. Where's the

"opportunity" in pouring tou-

er into copiers, of having only

youth and good skin on your

side when you try to leave the

Most of the training the

office before seven?

e and worthiessness of in-

some interns do learn a few things - other than that they are not as smart as their professors told them they were, that their fear of the fax machine is uppity, and that in the real world, older men like younger women and will stare at them across a divider. In one internship, I learned I wanted to be a journalist. Some friends received valuable training interning at newspapers.

On the other hand, some-

what ominously, I watched unpaid workers about to be discarded learn to talk of their new institutions in term of "we", as in "We produced that songstresses video." A budding new journalist I know decided against a first-hand experience of her boss and an elaborate. whisky-fuelled night of power and subjection. According to Hillary Abramson, editor of the forthcoming guidebook America's Top Internships, and, as one might imagine, a supporter of the institution, both sexual harassment of interns and boss-trainee dating are uncommon. As for Monica Lewinsky, Abramson says that Lewinsky has simply drawn attention to one of America's 10p internships. And, adds Abramson: "She's shown that internships do provide you with connections."

trainee receives is in office The writer is a journalist and power disparities. Of course, former intern in New York City.

America's most famous intern - like thousands of unpaid post-teen workers - is a paradox of powerlessness and privilege

both a girl and an unpaid There are even pundits who petual former intern, will nevworker trainee has been present in such notorious intern-*Spin* magazine. Last spring Bob Guccione Jr was found sitioned interns. "Guccione no longer interns but staff

urge young people to go pay- er get to live down this less, writing tracts such as Bob popularity is cheered on by magazines that depend on interns to do their grimier research and filing. American glamour industries draw heavily from this pool of free or very cheap labour. MTV "employs" up to 200 at a go. In contrast, The Late Show With David Letterman offers a mere 30 unpaid positions. The Internship Bible, a guide to the subject for prospective trainees, lists more than 100,000 internships. The White House is one of them according to The Bible there are 1,200 applicants per year for

track internships, 75 per cent ship programs as the one at Weinstein's I'll Work For Free! guilty in Manhattan Federal Court of allowing a hostile environment at Spin's offices in the early 1990s. At Spin, he and other editors dated and propoand other editors saw my client [the magazine's eventual research editor] and other women as girls and not as professionals, even after they were members," said Hillary Richard, the attorney for one of the former Spin editors. "With internships, you often have men in positions of power and a complete imbalance of calls for "enthusiastic students"

Bulgaria in Crisis⁄ LEFT TO FREEZE Children like Yordan, 1%, already mal-urished could die from 200 positions. The programme cold and hunger this January unless aid reaches them now. With mparatures plunometing to -15° Yordan's scan clothing and no shoes ffer him little protection from the bitter cold and tere is no money to heat his orphonage. There are 37,000 places in Cold weather alert real intention of a quid pro quo. In any event, Cook's alleged ar-No Money To Feed The Children No Money To Heat The Orphanages

Bulgaria is a country in the midst of a serious economic crisis. Now thousands of children are suffering terribly as winter reaches its coldest point. Urgent help is needed. There is little money to heat the orphanages. Orphanage Directors are having to beg for food from local villages and rarely know where the next meal is coming from. In some areas children, like Yordan, are going hungry and the cold could prove fatal for many children this winter.

Without aid this could be catastrophic for Bulgaria's orphanage children. The European Children's Trust, sister charity of The Romanian Orphanage Trust, is ready to distribute emergency food packs, clothes and fuel to the orphanages in most need. Your gift today will save lives and bring hope.

Section is a subject to a week or heat an

tever you can to help children er or call 01273 299399 NOW
e Bulgarian orphanage children. Cheques to 's Trust. Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card
Expiry date
Date
Postcode
14), Bulgaria Emergency The ten's Trust, FREEPOST LONDON, EC48 4AR or call Children

Why the Dependent Territories are like a virgin ...



TREVOR PHILLIPS FROM HERE TO ST HELENA

In the Department of Revisionist History, there are few more fertile areas of invention than sex. There are lessons for politicians here. In both sex and politics, the urge to stretch the truth to enhance your reputation is almost irresistible. Who has never been tempted to make the account of a past romantic experience longer, stronger and more exciting than it really was? After all, in most cases there are only two competing accounts of the events concerned; and most of the time it flatters both parties to paint the encounters in Technicolor. But up until now, I had always believed that there was one piece of history that women a grown-up society. There are would not be able to embellish: either you are a virgin or you aren't. There should be no risk of ambiguity - Clintonesque definitions of sex notwithstanding. Trust the Dutch to make fools of us all.

According to the British Medical Journal, doctors in the Netherlands are "reconstructing" the hymens of young brides-to-be, particularly among minority communities. The reason is that the women - and their families - are terrified that should their new husbands find out the truth, the young women will be shunned, abandoned and worse. It seems a small thing to do to prevent a lifetime's humiliation and unhappiness; but is it right to subject women to such grotesque treatment in order to satisfy male vanity? Or to put it another way, would any sensible woman choose to marry a man who is so wound up about this part of her past that he would regard her previous sexual partners as

a personal insult? I thought that sort of nobrain nonsense was reserved for members of Europe's royal families, who seem to care so deeply about these things that their sons can be forced into spectacularly unsuitable marriages. It really isn't an issue for Dependent Territories scattered

cases where previous intercourse has been "forced"; but surely the young women are hardly to blame. However these matters

aside, this kind of surgery raises another fundamental, maybe metaphysical question: is a reconstructed virgin the same as the original article? That is to say, after you have had the experience, even if you are eventually returned to the original physical state are you actually the same person, or are the changes simply hidden? And should it matter to your new spouse? In physics, it is well known that if you pass an electric current through a magnet. and then remove the current, the magnet looks and feels the same but that it never behaves in quite the same way again. There is even a peculiarly appropriate name for it: hysteresis, from the Greek word for "coming late"; 'nuff said.

All of this takes us quite naturally to Mr Robin Cook who being a man of the world will understand the problem of distinguishing the real thing from the manufactured article. This week he announced the Government's plans to reconstruct the connective tissue between this country and the so-called

all over the world. They include tiny places with romantic names like Anguilla, Pitcarra Islands, St Helena, the South Sandwich Islands, and naturally enough, the British Virgin Islands. These were all formerly part of the great empire on which the sun never set, their presence on early maps of the world largely justified only because British navigators needed to know where to find water, and after the first few colonists settled, where to drop the supplies. Otherwise they were simply rocks in the sea. Of course, we came to know and love the Falklands 15 years ago. but for the most part these places have hardly ever figured on our consciousness. That is why, back in 1962, the

then Conservative government was able, through the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, effectively to rupture their relationship with the UK, remove these British subjects' rights to come to the mother country and to cast them adrift in unfriendly seas. The break took place at the height of the era of decolonisation, when both main parties could argue that it was the colonies that demanded their freedom, and that whatever they lost from London's economic support would be made up for in international aid. But there was never any

The French held their colonies close even after independence; the British waved goodbye and closed the door. Granted, those that proved to be valuable staging posts for the Navy have been well-treated; and Bermuda, the Caymans and Gibraltar have built brilliantly on that base to create economically self-sufficient countries. However, many, such as Montserrat, were virtually destroyed after being abandoned by the imperial power. They remain pitiful, clinging wretches, hoping constantly for a smile of approbation from their former sponsor, cadging an extra dollar in aid here, a new hospital there.

Mr Cook's decision to bring these territories back into the warm embrace of the former power is a noble one. There are no votes in it, and some of his colleagues are as always fearful that people will say that Labour plans to swamp us with people who still carry spears. It is unlikely that there will be a flood of new applicants for entry, the maximum number who could apply to settle in the UK is about 160,000, and as far as those territories around the Caribbean and Atlantic are concerned, the preferred destination now is the US, where West Indians are re- be as soft and yielding as the firs markably successful immigrants. time around.

rogance is serving him well; in this case he is dismissing silly, fearful nonsense about immigration in order to do the right thing. In particular, he is rightly holding out for these people to have British passports; it is the least we can do for people who helped Britain to project its military power across the globe at vital moments. However, Robin Cook and Baroness Symons need to be

aware that however well they repair the break, the 36 years since 1962 have changed both sides in this relationship. The Dependent Territories that I know still feel culturally British, but they no longer have the automatic deference of colonia people. They no longer believe that every pound of aid money and every diplomatic concession is a boon from the Crown their leaders are men and women steeled in politics, and loyal to their own people rather than the majesty of a far-flung empire. And they will not be shy about asking for some share of the wealth that they helped to create as vital strategic links in the map of British naval pow er. It is right to revive the relationship; but after 36 years these renewed virgins may no

Pru's plan for £25m centre raises stakes in telebank war

The booming new industry of telebanking

The battle to dominate the UK's burgeoning market in telebanking grew more ferocious yesterday as three banks announced plans to double the staff they employ to answer calls. As Andrew Verity reports, the telebanking boom will bring thousands of jobs to towns where traditional industry has been devastated.

Prudential, Bank of Scotland and Standard Life all announced plans to double the numbers they employ in telebanking in a bid to capitalise on a boom which has drawn in thousands of new customers every week.

Prudential is to create 1,500 jobs in a brand new call centre in

Midlands accent 'will not put customers off'

Prudential's decision to locate in Derby was yesterday seen as a rebuff to many in the industry who insisted customers would be put off by a Midlands accent.

We researched lots of factors before choosing the site at Derby and one was the regional accent," said a spokesman for the Pru. "It came out very well in the research. It's seen as quite soft and welcoming."

The Pru has also defied a prediction that Midlands call centres would fail. Research by Scottish banks has suggested the Scots accent is seen as clear, well-spoken and friendly.

The West Midlands accent was unfairly perceived by outsiders as indicating stupidity. "There's a very low incidence of call centres in the Midiands." said Mr John McCanr of the Glasgow Development

But the Pru said its centre in Dudley had seen unprecedented success in attracting Derby, quadrupling the numbers employed at call centres. Its existing centre in Dudley has already drawn in 115,000 new customers.

An investment of £25m will build a call centre in Pride Park, Derby, which be nearly twice the length of Derby County's football pitch, giving a much-needed shot in the arm for the local economy. Many new staff will be taken on as part of the Government's "New Deal" on jobs for the un-

Mike Harris, chief executive of Prudential Banking, said: "I am confident we can continue to develop employment opportunities in Derby, building on the initial investment of up to 1,500 jobs over the next few years."

Bank of Scotland, which already employs 470 staff, is raising the numbers it employs to 710 in the next few months to cope with mushrooming demand for accounts run in partnership with Sainsbury's.

its new bank just one month ago, is set to boost staff numbers far beyond its original expectations. When the bank was launched in January, it expected to employ just 100 staff to handle calls.

After receiving 65,000 calls in one month, taking £165m in deposits and opening 23,000 new accounts, Standard Life has run out of space for much-needed new staff. Yesterday it confirmed it will buy 114,000 square feet of vacant space next to its head office in Edinburgh and recruit a further 400 staff. The bank hopes to open to business customers within a month. "Business has been pluenomenal," said Jim Spowart, nanaging director of Standard

Halifax is also joining the telebanking bandwagon and plans to sell mortgages and life assurance over the phone later this year. Its call centre in Leeds, which currently employs 500 staff, is likely

Call Coatro Employer

First Direct Up to 3000 planner

Call Centre Employees Bank of Scotland 110 (rising to 160)

Call Cestre Employee

Bank of Scotland 360 (rising to 1300) Stantand Life 150 (rising to 500)

Royal Bank of 125

cottish Widows 65

Prudential 600

Cali Centre Employ

Royal Bank of 125

Royal Bank of 125

Standard Life, which opened to expand up to its capacity of

The boom in jobs dealing with customers over the phone is not confined to banking. Leisure groups such as EMI are also doing an increasing amount of business over the phone.

According to the Glasgow Development Agency, Scotland alone will see jobs in call centres more than double to 37,000 by the year 2000. With 120 call centres already running across Scotland, the industry has quintupled in the last five years. While most traditional banks

already offer some telebanking services, take-up has been small. But in the last two years, the entry of new players such as Scottish Widows, Tesco, Sainsbury and Standard Life, all offering high rates of interest on accessible deposit accounts, has put them on the back foot.

NatWest is now piloting a high-interest account, offering more than 6 per cent with instant access, but has not publicised it.

Ian McNuff, head of telephony at NatWest, said telephone contact had doubled in the last five years, even for high street banks, "We expect in 1988 to receive some 100 million contacts by phone with the customers. That makes it the fastest growing part of any financial services business.

"The Pru's move simply recognises that customers are now more confident with dealing over the phone."

Iohn McCann, a spokesman for the agency, said: "The growth in the last five to six years has been staggering. From Scotland's perspective, we now have a very well-developed service sector. Since the old industries have gone, there's a whole generation which is now used to seven-day opening. seven-day working, seven-day

Wages for staff at call centres tend to be under £10,000, with jobs such as selling insurance. A usually be paid £4.60 an hour or £9,000 a year. Employers tend to ask only

for a "customer service background"-which can include any porters, we have been hit by the



Upping the ante: Increased production is likely at the Burnaston plant (above) after losses

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Toyota, the Japanese car maker is redoubling efforts to cut costs at its Burnaston plant in Derbyshire after its UK operations plunged into loss last year because of the strong pound.

Three quarters of Burnaston's output is exported to the Continent and the strength of sterling is thought to have wiped out profits in 1997. In 1996, Toyota Motor Manufacturing UK made £10m, up from £1m the year before.

The cost-cutting measures are likely to take the form of raising productivity levels further at Burnaston and driving higher wages for more complex down component costs. Bryan Jackson, the director of TM-MUK responsible for in declined to give details of Burnaston's financial performance

But he said: "Like many exstrong pound. Because we can-

Toyota to cut UK costs as sterling takes its toll

not raise prices we have to tackle our production costs.

Production costs at Burnaston are 10 per cent higher than those of Toyota's car plants in Japan and the US and a priority will be to reduce this gap.

Last year Burnaston, which employs 2,650, raised productivity levels by 5 per cent. Production will increase from 105,000 to 160,000 this year Corolla model beginning in September. But Toyota only plans to take on an extra 300 workers to cope with the increase. Output from the plant next year will rise to 220,000.

Burnaston's component purchases will double from £500m last year to £1bn in 1999. Half of its 200 suppliers are British and they account for 60 per cent of the components

bought by value. Toyota said it did not expect this ratio to change even after the introduction of the single European currency. Mr Jackson said TMMUK had not yet Rover's lead by requiring all its suppliers to deal in euros from 1 January next year. A study team is examining the impact on Burnaston of the launch of the single currency.

Toyota aims to raise total European sales to 520,000 this year from 470,000 in 1997 as part of a global strategy of in-creasing world wide sales to five

It expects the overall European market to grow by only 2-3 per cent this year but expects its own sales to grow much more strongly in Germany, France, the UK, Italy and

Meanwhile, Toyota appeared to rule out joining the auction for the luxury car maker Rolls-Royce, which has been put up for sale by its parent company Vickers. Asked whether Toyota had requested a copy of the memorandum of sale from Rolls' financial adof Toyota Motor Europe, Tatsuo Takahashi, said: "To my knowledge we have had no discussions, no negotiations, nothing."

Michael Harrison

Sainsbury's bank proves a hit with customers

J Sainsbury, the supermarket giant, yesterday revealed that its new bank was proving a big hit with customers, attracting more than 10,000 accounts a week. Sainsbury's bank, which was opened less than a year ago. now has more than 600,000 accounts with deposits of more than £1.4bu.

Sainsbury's appears to have fought off a strong challenge from Safeway, which recently launched an account offering 7.4 per cent interest, higher than the 6.5 per cent offered to

Sainsbury's customers. Mike Dennis, food retailing analysts at SG Securities, said: "This is a great performance from the banking business. Their account is easier to run than Safeway's and they have a more loyal customer base."

Sainsbury is now looking to rapidly expand its banking business. A Sainsbury spokesman said: "We are looking to build up our personal loans and mortgage business, lending more of the money we have on

There was also a strong performance from Homebase. the DIY retailer, where buoyant Christmas trading helped like-for-like sales rise 9.8 per cent. The good figures spread optimism around the DIY sector. Shares in Boots, owner of Do it All, jumped 38.5p to 893p. and Kingfisher, which runs B&Q, rose 16p to 987p.

However Sainsbury, once Britain's most popular grocer, is falling further behind arch rival Tesco which is now by far the higgest food retailer in the country with more than 15 per cent of the market. Like-for-like supermarket sales growth slowed to 3.2 per cent in the 16 weeks to 10 January, compared to the 5 per cent growth the company was achieving last year.

The figure is well short of the 6.5 per cent that Tesco announced recently. But Sainsbury said gross margins had held firm. "They're a good set of results, it's just that Tesco's results were better. So its 'not bad, could do better'," said Clive Vaughan of research group Verdict.

hour opening programme over Christmas has proved very popular with customers and it planned to extend the scheme. Our customers are telling us that it made shopping easier and lead to shorter queues at the check out."

Sainsbury said that its 24

The group also plans to open 18 new stores this year and 19 next, including 3 more stores in Northern Ireland as it seeks to expand outside Eng-

- Andrew Yates

Countrywide network fined £250,000 in pensions scandal

Countrywide, the UK's second largest network of independent financial advisers, was yesterday fined £250,000 for one of the worst cases to date of failure to clear up the pension mis-selling scandal.

The Personal Investment Authority slammed the company for fundamental misconduct. It said Countrywide had even failed to identify who might be eligible for compensation over mis-selling.

In its findings, the PIA said Countrywide failed to work out who was on the urgent list for compensation - including people who had died or retired since being mis-sold a personal pension by an IFA.

The regulator said the network failed to monitor how much effort its members had made to look after the interests of victims of mis-selling, even though Countrywide was set up on the basis that it was responsible for individual members' regulation. It also failed to check whether the information given by its member firms

A FINE RECORD		
Company	Date	Fine (£)
London & Manchester	28/1/98	525,000
Friends Provident	30/9/97	450,000
DBS Financial Management	3/9/97	425,000
Albany Life	2/12/97	375,000
Countrywide	6/2/98	250,000
M&E Network	14/8/97	100,000
Lincoln Independent	8/7/97	75,000
Berkeley Independent	23/4/97	70,000
Source: PIA		•

owed on average £8,000 each money which had gone to paying for the IFAs' commission and life insurer's charges rather than to the client's retirement fund. Countrywide, which represents 1,500 independent fi-

nancial advisers and is the second biggest network in the country, admitted its errors as soon as the regulator visited it in August last year.

This helped to mitigate the size of the fine. In contrast, the country's largest network, DBS, a quoted company, was fined £425,000. DBS had failed to admit its failings and co-operate fully with the PIA.

The fine is the fifth largest to be levied over mis-selling. Among the criteria used to decide the fine were the severity of the mis-selling, the firm's size and its attitude to the regulator.

However, the PIA pointed out that it had been aware of the need to clear up the cases more than two and a half years before, when regulators began the effort to clear up the scandal.

The regulator said Countrywide had now increased resources dedicated to compensating customers. But the network had missed the crucial December deadline for sorting out 90 per cent of the most urgent cases. - Andrew Verity

Institutions may go to court over Astec buyout plans

An acrimonious boardroom split at Astec (BSR), the power supply manufacturer, intensified yesterday after two leading shareholders revealed they were considering going to court to resolve a dispute over future control of the company. Royal & Sun Alliance and

Electra Fleming, two of the company's biggest institutional investors, stepped up the

engineering giant which controls 51 per cent of Astec. Emerson astonished non-executive directors of Astec last month when it announced plans to buy out minority investors, remove three executive directors from the board and

stop paying out dividends. The two shareholders last night said they were "considering court proceedings" against Emerson under section

which deals with attempts by big investors to prejudice the interests of other shareholders. In a statement Royal &

SunAlliance, which speaks for just over 5 per cent of Astec. added that Emerson was "considered to be influencing the affairs of the company to the detriment of other shareholders.

The institution cited the move by Emerson to call an extraordinary shareholders meeting to approve the changes. Last month 18 institutions put their names to a letter condemning the plans as a "blatant

disregard" of their interests. The news came after independent directors of Astec opposed to Emerson's plans yesterday called on shareholders to consider the legal position

The directors, led by deputy chairman Peter Marshall, who was deputy chief executive of

the former Plessey electronics and defence business, said dissident directors were prevented from going to court themselves under company

Although Emerson has not launched a formal offer to take full control of Astec, it outlined an indicative bid to buy the shares at the current market price, which yesterday fell 05p to 124p.

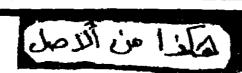
– Chris Godsmark

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		10.50	0.39	2696-20	2075.70	
TSE 350	2680.30 2609.93	10.08	0.39	2623.63	2056.07	3.10
TSE 350 TSE All Share	2680.30			2623.63 2407.40	2056.07 2182.10	3.10 2.9
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TSE 350 TSE All Share TSE SmallCap TSE Fledging TSE AIM	2680.30 2609.93 2410.60	7.30 4.10	0.39 0.30 0.32	2623.63 2407.40 1346.50 1138.00 8299.03	2056.07 2182.10 1225.20 965.90 6356.78	3.10 3.10 2.90 3.10 1.00
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UK 10 vear ail US long bond 1 yr chg Long beac MAIN PRICE CHANGES

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لمكذا من ألاصل



JEREMY WARNER ON HOW THE **EURO MIGHT** DAMAGE THE CITY'S. POSITION AS EUROPE'S LEADING

FINANCIAL

CENTRE

Why the City should fear the single currency

21/BUSINESS

Can the City hope to survive as Europe's pre eminent financial centre after monetary union? The general view in the City, shared and articulated by Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, is that it can; that it is so far ahead in terms of infrastructure and critical mass of Frankfurt. Paris and Milan that none of them is capable of catching up. Furthermore, the argument goes, the City's position might actually be enhanced if Britain stays out of the single currency, it would positively cant parts of his bank's derivatives book would thrive as an entrepot between Europe and the rest of the world.

Is this all just complacency, or is London's position in financial markets indeed an unassailable one? Until quite recently I would have argued the latter, but I'm now I'm not so sure. It won't happen overnight, it may even take several decades, but I'm beginning to think that the City might one day get overtaken and eventually trounced.

This needs some explaining, for at the moment all the evidence rather points in the other direction.

Nearly all the big continental players with investment banking and capital market pretensions have chosen London as their European base for these activities. Because of language and cultural ties, the City also makes an obvious choice of location for US investment and commercial bankers. This creates a snow ball effect. If the Americans and Europeans chose London, then the Japanese and other Asian economies must follow in their wake. And so on and so forth.

So attractive has the City's formula become that a number of US investment bankers have gone beyond merely using London as a base for European business, and begun quietly shifting international operations, where location is unimportant, away from their financial centre of domicile and into London.

At the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, this week, one leading US investment banker admitted privately that he had become so disillusioned with the byzantine capital and regulatory requirements of New York, that signifibe moved to London over the next year.

After an exhaustive study of more than 50 possible alternative locations, including a number of offshore centres, he had concluded that the City had the most attractive combination of regulatory requirements and trading infrastructure anywhere in the world.

Does that mean, then, that foreigners come to London because of its relative lack of regulation compared to rivals? Not at all, he insisted. This was not an attempt to escape regulation. But he did believe London was more in tune with and adapted to the needs of practitioners. He also liked the way City regulation was being consolidated into a single organisation, the Financial Services Authority, which he believed mirrored trends in the market place.

The decision, moreover, had been entirely uninfluenced by the approach of the single currency, or any kind of a judgement on whether Britain would be in or out. Trading financial instruments is a "virtual" activity which could as easily be located on the other side of the moon as London, Frankfurt or New York provided it had a phone line and a computer terminal.

All this would rather back the view that the City's position is safe. So long as London remains a groovy place to live, and as important, its tax regime relatively benign, the foreigner will continue to flock in. Others have compared its position to that of the Wimbledon termis tournament. This is a good parallel if an inexact one. The event and place is quintessentially English, but virtually all the players are foreign and they love playing here. As a result, Wimbledon remains the most prestigious tournament in the world, despite our lack of players of international stature.

I suspect, however, that this is also where London's greatest weakness as a financial centre lies. At the moment the City prospers as an international market place almost wholly divorced from the rest of the UK economy. Most of what happens there in terms of securities and foreign exchange dealing is largely irrelevant to the rest of the country.

That's not to say the vast flows of international capital that run through the City don't have an effect on the UK economy. They do; because the City is pivotal to the way capital is allocated nationally and internationally, it is a far more powerful force in the land than Gordon Brown and the Government. But in the sense that this trading of capital could be conducted from almost anywhere in the world and still have the same effect. it is not relevant to the lives of most ordinary people. The same is obviously not true of a manufacturing plant or a street market.

All this makes the City quite unlike the world's other two main financial centres - New York and Tokyo. Both of these centres exist pri-

marily for the purpose of servicing the vast domestic economies from which they spring. The City is different. Think of New York and the image that springs to mind is of a tiny head on top of the Arnold Schwarzenigger type body of the US domestic economy. Think of the City and what you have is a vast head on top of a puny and dispensable little body.

Lying just across the Channel, however is the Continent, soon to be united by the single currency. While the euro looked like being a currency confined to just France, Germany, Austria and the Benefux countries, the City could have carried on much as before thriving as an offshore centre for Anglo-Saxon speculators. But now it looks as if the single currency will be launched in January next year on a much wider basis, with il or more countries. An economic unit potentially far more powerful than Japan or even the US will come into existence and it will need a comparable capital markets infrastructure to service it.

It is possible that the City will somehow or other manage to graft itself onto this giant new single European body. That becomes less likely if Britain isn't in at the start of the single currency, but the exercise may be impossible anyway. All depends on the extent to which the euro establishes itself as a viable alternative reserve currency and store of value to the dollar. To do so it must create an integrated capital markets infrastructure with comparable liquidity to that of the US. That means primarily an integrated debt market capable of attracting Japanese and other international capital on the same scale as New York.

I hesitate to pontificate about a field I am no expert on, so I will let Howard Lutnick, chief executive of the specialist New York primary dealer, Cantor Fitzgerald, do the talking for me. According to Mr Lutnick, the creation of such a market depends vitally on establishing a bonchmark instrument about which all others can trade. In the US this instrument is the Treasury long

bond. Whichever financial centre manages to lay claim to the benchmark, be it London, Frankfurt, Paris on Milan, will eventually inherit the crown jewels. Trading will naturally gravitate to this centre and banks will therefore want to locate there. Corporate finance, fores, equity, futures trading and all the other things you associate with a major financial centre would follow in their wake.

Since the issuer most likely to create this benchmark is either Germany or France, the City in this scenario is in a perilous position. What's to stop the City seizing this benchmark where ever it is created and using it to its own purposes? For the answer look no further than this week's news that Frankfurt has finally overtaken London in the most traded derivatives contract in Europe, the German 10 year Government bond future. Germany, in other words, has claimed back its inheritance and it will fight tooth and nail not to lose it again. The City's best hope of retaining its present position long term, then, is if the euro is a disaster or fails to create the benchmark instrument Mr Lutnick talks of, In those circumstances, London becomes the default centre. It would be foolish to count on that happening, however.

Slump in industry was behind Bank's decision on rates

Official figures indicating that British industry is on the verge of recession explained the Bank of England's decision not to raise interest rates earlier this week. The latest US evidence, meanwhile, showed it is still enjoying bumper growth. Diane Coyle. Economics Editor, reports.

December saw a 0.2 per cent drop in industrial output, the mance. Some City analysts exfifth month running it had declined confounding economists who had expected a most saw them as a vindication rebound in production following the recent publication of more upbeat business surveys.

Manufacturing output, the biggest component of the total. fell by 0.5 per cent, its third monthly decline running. The figures mean industri-

al production has now suffered its weakest stretch since 1991. Another monthly drop

would put industry technically into recession, the definition of which is two successive quarters

The weakness went across the board in manufacturing. with monthly gains in only food, drink and tobacco and petrol refining. Outside manufacturing, both electricity, gas and water supply and oil and gas production rebounded after a very weak November.

ports as a result of the strong pound and slower growth in demand in home markets lies behind the depressing perforpressed doubt about the reliability of the figures, but of the Monetary Policy Committee's decision to leave the cost of borrowing unchanged.

Michael Saunders at Salomon Smith Barney said interest rates had now reached their peak. "Collapsing exports will produce very weak growth in the first half of 1998," he said. Although this was the widespread view, some dissenters

of declining output.

for the minority opinion that there are still inflationary dangers in a report that pay deals are running further ahead of inflation this month. Incomes Data Services said almost half of the 40 deals they had monitored were for 4 per cent or more, and two - covering IT staff at Barclays and House of A combination of falling ex-Fraser employees - were in double figures.

Still, figures from across the Atlantic yesterday, greeted with delight by President Clinton, left little doubt that the British economy is far weaker than the US.

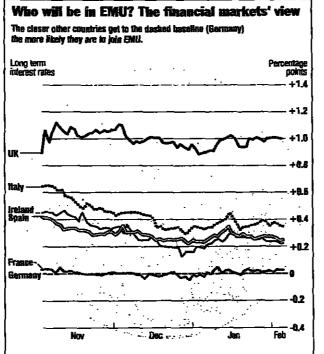
said the official figures were im-

There was some support

plausibly weak.

The American economy created 358,000 non-farm jobs last month, and in the latest three months has been generating jobs at an annual rate of 4.5 million. The proportion of the US workforce currently in work is, at 64.2 per cent, the highest ever.

The figures also showed a jump in the average working week from 34.6 to 34.8 hours.



TOWARDS EMU: If the line moves towards the German base line it means investors no longer require such a high premium for holding that country's bonds compared to German ones, because they are confident the currency won't devalue against the mark. In other words, they think that country will be locked into a single currency with Germany In 10 years' time.

AWAY FROM EMU: However, if they think the country won't be in EMU, that it will have higher inflation, and that there is a risk of a future devaluation against the mark, then they will demand an extra premium for holding that country's bonds, so

When will EMU start? The City Analysts' View.

Mākko Europe, Paipe Webber, ABN Amro, JP Morgan, Desische Morgan Greefell Salomon Brothers, Goldman Sachs, HSBC James Capel, UBS what probability they placed on EMU starting on time.

Probability EMIU starts on time: Probability EMU is delayed:

(87% last week) (10% last week)

(3% last week)

Italy calms Germany's fears for euro

Italian charm last week won over sceptical German politicians, boosting the City's assessment of the chances of European economic and monetary union (EMU) starting on 1 January 1999. Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, the Italian Finance Minister, toured Germany to calm fears that his country's debt problems could weaken the credibility of the

The German parliament's economics committee, whose support will be crucial when Germans vote on the euro this May, gave Mr Ciampi a ringing endorsement. A statement said that Italy could converge "in and through the euro".

The Independent's panel of economists now believes the financial risk of ditching Italy ing it on board. Mr Ciampi said Italy's national debt, running at 120 per cent of gross domestic product, will reduce to 100 per cent in the next few years. This allows it to match a loose version of the Maastricht criteria.

Both Nikko Europe and James Capel raised their odds on a punctual EMU. Only ABN Amro and Goldman Sachs think there is a 20 per cent chance it will not go ahead on time.

- Andrew Verity

Biocompatible shares plunge after chief leaves

The value of shares in Biocompatible, the healthcare company, plunged by more than 40 per cent yesterday, after it announced that Alistair Taylor had resigned as president and chief executive. A company spokeswoman said he had lost the confidence of the board in his ability to find marketing partners for the company's innovative products. The shares fell 160p to 215p, wiping £11m off its market value.

The board has formed a management committee which will be chaired by Jeremy Curnock Cook, ahead of the appointment of a new chief executive. In a statement the company said: "The management committee will focus on progressing on going discussions with potential commercial partners as well as reviewing the options for independent distribution of the company's stents in some markets."

Navy work goes to Vosper

The government yesterday approved a plan to transfer some Royal Navy support services to Flagship Training, a subsidiary for Vosper Thornycroft, the shipbuilder, in a contract worth £300m over 13 years. The move is intended to cut government defence spending and is still subject to consultation with trade unions. The agreement applies to some 434 civil service posts and 550 Royal Navy uniformed posts at the Naval Recruiting and Training Agency. Vosper Thornycroft owns 37 per cent of Flagship.

Marconi Instruments sold

GEC, the defence and electronics group, has sold its Marconi Instruments unit to IFR Systems, a US test instrumentation maker, for £65m. The sale includes Marconi Instruments in the UK and Marconi Instruments Inc in the US, as well as units in France, Spain and Germany, GEC said. Marconi, which makes electronic test equipment, made a pre-tax profit of £4.5m on sales of £65.9m in the year to March 31, 1997.

BOC in £40m investment

BOC Group, the industrial gases group, said yesterday it would invest more than £40m in new production facilities at Margram in South Wales following a supply contract from British Steel. The investment will lift the quantity of industrial gases it supplies to a British Steel plant at Port Talbot to almost 3,000 tonnes per day.

Bodycote buys TI unit

Bodycote International, the engineering services company has bought Thermal Processing Group from engineering company TI Group for £15.1m in cash. TPG, which provides heat treatment and metal joining services to the UK engineering sector, made operating profits of £1.7m in 1997. The purchase increases the number of heat treatment plants owned by Bodycote in the UK to 17 from 13.

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EP\$	Dividend
Sirse Group (1)	220.9m (229.2m)	2.1m (1.2m)	0.8p (0.5p)	0.3p (0.2p)
Gaskly Brothers (I)	3.58m (4.03m)	0.168m (G.354m)	2.67p (4.71p)	0.75p (0.75)
CC: Holdings (F)	2.39m (2.56m)	0.011m (0.242m)	0.1p (22.2p)	2.5p (n/a)
Shire Pharm, (I)	28.50m (9.88m)	2 452m (-0 105m)	-0.3p (-0.2p)	

US senator seeks to block SBC-UBS deal

tween the Swiss banking giants SBC and UBS, which would create the world's second largest bank, faces a challenge in the United States, it emerged vesterday.

Alfonse D'Amato, a leading US Senator, has called on Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve, to block the

Mr D'Amato, chairman of the Senate Banking Committee and a critic of Switzerland's World War Two role, urged the red not to bless the merger until the banks give a clearer accounting of their handling of dormant Holocaust-era ac-

The multi-billion merger be-

Mr D'Amato also urged

losses from UBS's London-

with Nazi Germany. Mr D'Amato wrote: "SBC

and UBS have yet to provide answers to a host of questions regarding their conduct regarding the disposition of assets of Holocaust victims and their heirs, as well as their record of collaboration with the Nazis during the war."

the Fed to make sure the Swiss Federal Banking Commission met US bank supervision stan-

In his letter, Mr D'Amato, a New York Republican, also highlighted the scale of the

based equity derivatives department which he said could be as high as \$689m (£430m). UBS denied the claim, saying its derivatives trading losses were limited to £190m.

Mr D'Amato said the issue of the losses meant the effectiveness of Swiss bank supervisors was "open to serious question". Fed approval for the US

business of the new bank is important because it has large asset management and investment banking activities in the US and wants to expand those

Yesterday the two Swiss banking giants said they were confident American authorities would approve their merger SBC spokesman Christoph Meier said: "The Fed will examine this merger in a fair and factual manner. We are very confident. I don't see any danger."

UBS said the attack by Mr D'Amato was "disconcerting". UBS spokesman Robert Vogler said: "We have indications that the Fed will not mix Holocaust issues with merger issues."

Shareholders of both banks voted overwhelmingly this week to merge the two and form the world's second biggest

Microsoft in talks with Flextech over interactive television

Microsoft, the global computer number of potential ventures software giant, is considering a move into the emerging UK digital interactive television market which would represent a serious challenge to the planned offerings from satellite and cable operators.

It emerged yesterday that discussions were under way between Microsoft and Flextech, the pay television group which could see the two companies collaborate on a rival interactive service. Shares in Flextech rose 15p to 502.5p. though sources indicated the talks were at a "very early stage" and were just one of a

under discussion. A push by Microsoft would

throw down the gauntlet to British Interactive Broadcasting (BIB), the satellite venture part owned by BSkyB, and British Telecom, which aims to launch a service offering home banking, shopping and educational channels by the end of the year.

Flextech has already launched a home shopping channel called Screenshop and plans a travel shopping channel in the spring, though in both cases customers have to use the telephone to buy goods or making bookings.

- Chris Godsmark

WHO'S SUING WHO

JOHN WILLCOCK



Virgin, Ladbrokes, Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury's have together won a landmark legal action against a company which registered over 100 domain names on the internet using some of the biggest names in British business, and then offered them for sale.

Dinah Nissen, a partner with Harbottle & Lewis, the solicitors representing Richard Branson's Virgin group, says the court victory over the One in a Million company is "the first of its kind in the UK. This will send out a message to people involved in this kind of activity that the courts won't take kindly to it".

The two defendants, Richard Conway and Julian Nicholson, registered a series of famous names as domains on the internet and then offered some of them for sale. The domains registered included included virgin.org and BLorg. Mr Conway wrote to Burger King offering to sell it the domain burgerking.co.uk for £25,000.

The four plaintiffs were trying to stop the duo from doing so by alleging trademark infringement and passing off. The defendants have won the right to appeal, and the case will probably be heard this spring, but Ms Nissen is confident the decision will be up-

bank by assets.

"There are those that argue that the internet should be a 'free for all' ... but where an action infringes someone else's rights [the law must apply]," she said.

Domain names do not just act as addresses, but also have a trademark purpose, she says. In other words, it is perfectly reasonable that BMW, for the sake of argument, would want a domain name such as brow.com rather than abc.com.

Ms Nissen sees such legal arguments about the internet growing as its influence over our lives grows, through advertising and the like. The US government this week proposed to introduce a range of new suffixes to domain names to ease congestion on the Internet, and this will only produce new challenges to brand owners, she says.

While the case was being heard in front of Jonathan Sumption QC, sitting as a deputy judge in the High Court, the One in a Mil-

lion company registered harbottle.com as a domain name. Ms Nissen was philosophical about the move; she will not be taking ac-

I've just come across a copy of a writ lodged by "Phil Collins Limited" against two American musicians, Rahmlee Michael Davis and Louis Satterfield. The writ defines the plaintiff as "a company incorporated under the laws of England and Wales, and is and was at all times entitled to the recording services of the popular musician Phil Collins". Makes a change from "bald rocker", I sup-

Anyway, the ex-drummer for Genesis is claiming that he overpaid royalties to these two backing musicians relating to his 1990 world tour. Mr Collins is claiming repayment of US\$392,965.98 from each of them, plus interest.

Mr Collins claims that under an agreement dated 6 December 1989 the duo were due royalties on a record he subsequently released of the live show, but only on the con-

dition that they had played on all 15 of the live recordings. In fact there had been a mistake, and they had each played on only five recordings.

Royal & Sun Alliance Trust Company together with 20 individual investors has lodged a writ against Healey & Baker, the surveyors, and 22 other parties over the valuation the surveyors put on a business park The writ claims that Healey & Baker over-

valued the property, Units 1-17 Sextant Park, Medway City Estate, Rochester Kent, when it was purchased by the North-west Kent Trust in 1992.

Royal & Sun Alliance has since taken over from Midland Bank as the trustees of the Property Enterprise Zone Trust. Such Trusts were set up by the previous Government to enable investors to use tax advantages when putting money into property. Such Trusts have since been abolished, and the Trust in the writ ceases to exist as a legal entity at the end of February. Royal and Sun therefore took

the precautionary measure of lodging the writ to keep the issue alive.

Asil Nadir's business empire Polly Peck went bust seven years ago, but much of the litigation started soon afterwards by liquidators Deloitte & Touche is still going on. Last week the liquidators, led by Chris Morris, switched solicitors for their action against Polly Peck's former auditors, Stoy Hayward, from Dibb Lupton Alsop to Freshfields, a rival City law firm. The liquidators will continue to use Dibb Lupton on most of the other Polly Peck business, and would not give the reason for

Glaxo Group, part of drugs giant Glaxo Wellcome, is suing Lagap Pharmaceuticals of Woolmer Way, Bordon, Hampshire, for damages over a patent infringement.

A spokeswoman for Glaxo said yesterday: We are claiming recovery of damages for what we believe to be past infringments of Salbutamoi Syrup." She would not be drawn, however, on how much Glaxo is seeking.

BT's downturn in uncertain climate adds to market anxiety

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

BT, figures next week, is sudnudged 600p as the wires crackled with stories of new links with Microsoft, the US com-

puter group. Yesterday they fell 17p to 563p in busy trading with cautious comments from two investment houses and worries of further Brussels scrutiny undermining sentiment.

Third-quarter results, due on Thursday, are not expected to provide much impetus. A the stock market looking for around £780m which would compare with £944m. For the year around £2.7bn is expected against £3.3bn.

Lehman Brothers and ABN Amro Hoare Govett provided the cautious voices. Lehman switched its stance from outperform to neutral and Hoare special attention as the Asian Govett suggested the shares crisis developed. were overvalued.

impact on the telephony group it was enough, in the

to market anxiety. downtum seems inevitable with aborted MCI deal, BT de- to generate excitement at, EMI, clared a special 35p dividend. the showbiz group, up 20p to

There is talk that BT will re- 490p. And, once again, there windfall (160p a share).

utilities, which have enjoyed

United Utilities fell 22p to ing statement did nothing for

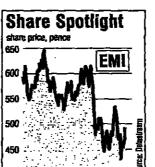
The European interest. 828p; National Power 13p to shares of the superstore chain denly dialling the wrong num- channelled through Oftel in- 652p and take over favourite bers. Two weeks ago the shares volves BT's charges. Although Southern Electric 5p to 550p. unlikely to have a significant After a fitful day blue chips managed another triumphant flourish, riding to another peak. uncertain climate now For much of the session it enveloping the shares, to add looked as though the index would finish on a negative note. BT, which is still seeking an But a late flurry produced a 23.3 international partner following points gain, lifting the closing its unsuccessful MCI adventure, calculation to 5,629.7. The preis one of the blue chips which vious peak, 5.612.8, was could, if it so wished, bolster its achieved on Tuesday. Supportstanding through a share buy ing indices were also confident. back. In May, as part of the Take over speculation continued

> turn up to £5bn to sharehold- was whispers of corporate action ers, or 80p a share. Some think on the financial front with it should contemplate a £10bn National Westminster Bank leading the way, up 62p gain to BT's discomfort occurred as 1,190p. Abbey National the stock market reined back shrugged off its Far Eastern exposure, wiping out an early 39p fall to close 8p higher at 1,285p.

Although J Sainsbury's trad-

it provided a boost to Boots, up 38.5p to 893p, and Kingfisher,14p to 985p. Sainsbury's revelation that its Homebase do-it-yourself operation posted on 12p to 317.5p. like-for-like sales up 9.8 per cent. provided a reminder that the di-y market remains strong.

Other retailers were firm with Marks & Spencer 23.5p higher at 586p and Safeway, where rumours of Asda interest still drift around, up 8.5p to 376.5p.



MAMJJASONDJF

Suggestions of expansion with Microsoft to create an in-moves lifted First Leisure teractive television alliance. 13.5p to 297.5p and pubs chain JD Wetherspoon, recently ruffled by profit downgradings, put

Biocompatibles Interna-

tional, last year above 1,400p. slumped 160p to 215p, its lowest since 1996 on the departure of chief executive, Alistair Taylor. The group is seeking a replacement. The shares have slipped since the company failed to clinch an expected US deal last year. British Biotech, which fell beavily on Thursday after European regulators delayed the launch of its pancreatitis treatment, staged a modest recovery, up 7p at 99p.

seemingly destined for Footsie if its rating does not improve. membership, found the excitement a little overwhelming and promotional group, shadand slipped 85p to 2,417.5p.

Misys, the computer group

ed to 28p despite buying by directors. Claybithe, an elec-Flextech, the pay television tronic group, gained 16p to 92.5p following a bid approach. company, hardened 15p to 502.5p on news it is in talks

TAKING STOCK

British Borneo Petroleum

Syndicate fell 9.5p to 326p in

late trading after it plugged and

abandoned one of its deep wa-

ter Gulf of Mexico exploration

wells. Hardy Oil & Gas, edged

ahead to 287.5p after Merrill

Lynch said buy. The group an-

nounced a commercial gas

strike in Pakistan on Thursday.

terials rump of the old acquis-

itive conglomerate, improved

9p to 289p on Robert Fleming

support. The securities house

suggests the shares are

suffering from Hanson's past

financial engineering. It be-

lieves it could suffer the indig-

nity of becoming a bid target

Share Price Data

Watermark, the marketing

Hanson, the building ma-

The shake up on the Hanover International share register continues with Bridgend, the distributor, selling its remaining 3.1 per cent stake at 128.5p. Last week the Montanaro smaller companies fund lifted its interest to 11.79 per cent, buying shares from Equitable Life Assurance. There are persistent suggestions Jarvis Hotels is interested in the even strong hotel chain. The shares shaded to 126.5p.

After football and rugby its the turn of ice hockey to make its City bow. Telford Tigers made a successful debut on the fringe Ofex market, scoring a 5.5p plus to 45.5p, pricing the club at £770,000.

Tullow Oil firmed to 148p. The long awaited announcement of Bangladesh developments should appear soon with the Irish oil group thought to have achieved a positive outcome.

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The finest fish in the world netted in the Thames

certified as ecologically correct. That's because the men who catch it are, essentially, peasants of the sea.

pillaged by hi-tech catchers, Essex on day-long trips, using methods which have changed little in the past 100 years: small boats, large-mesh

manual labour. It is cold, backstraining, often meagrely rewarded work. especially this winter, when unusually warm water has delayed the shoaling of the fish. But the West Mersea fishermen and a couple of other small harbours near by have rules and methods which safeguard the dis-

tinctive stock of

local herring in

nets and a lot of

the long term. (It is a sub-species with one verout into the North Sea.)

Herring from the Thames es-turnational organisation set up turnary are expected to become by the World Wide Fund for the first fish in the world to be Nature and the food and fish multinational Unilever, hopes to grant them its first certificate for sustainable fishing.

Whoever sells their herring In an age when oceans and will be able to label the packcontinental shelves are being aging boasting of this, easing the corporate conscience and they fish a couple of miles off probably allowing a premium price to be charged. "If someone in Islington wants to pay extra for our herrings, that's just

fine," said John Jowers, a West Mersea fish merchant and chairman of the local fishermen's cooperative. "But we're as interested in conserving local jobs and communities as in conserving the fish." The boats use a long line of curtain-shaped drift nets with a

54mm least left hanging in the water for several swim through,



Sea harvest: Fishermen in West Mersea sorting a catch. Thames estuary herring will be the first fish in the world to be certified as ecologically correct Photograph: David Rose

heads get through the mesh the catch bass and Dover sole. catch in less than an hour.

rest is too big to pass through, They only go after herring diagonal mesh at but they cannot swim back be-during the season, from Octocause their gill covers snag the ber to March, sticking to rules constraints to conserve stocks, across. They are filaments. Unlike a lot of North written and theoretically en-Sea fishing, theirs is targeted: forced by the Ministry of Agrinearly everything in the nets is culture and Fisheries for the hours: tiddlers adult herring. They catch none northern side of the Thames esof the juvenile fish so vital to tuary. The boats must be un- 100 local jobs rely on the fishwhile big fish find their way the stocks' future. Next to der 17m long, can only use drift tebrae less than those farther barred and bounce off. But manothing gets chucked over the nets and the total quota for all ture herring, aged two years or side. There are 14 boats in- of them is 131 tonnes a year, That is why the new Marine more, are trapped. Once their volved and in summer they which one big trawler could

Mr Jowers says it was the fishermen who demanded the who stuck to them for years before the ministry made them law and who enforce them among themselves. He reckons ery, with their herring trucked to markets around Britain and on the Continent. Some families from West Mersea, near Colchester, have been catching

"It provides a good living for much for catching the tide at kids who are never going to get lots of exams at school. If a place likes this loses its locally working community it just becomes a dormitory suburb ... It's no longer a pleasant place

In the harbour, skipper Chrissy Mole and his crewman were shaking about 30 stone of we tell people how we catch herring out of his nets. That herring, they look at us as if

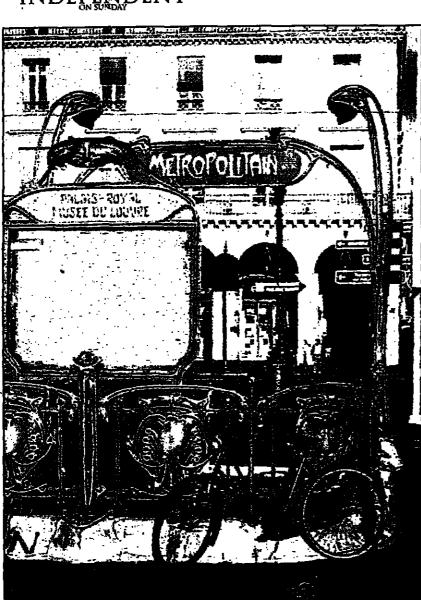
herring since the Middle Ages. would fetch about £70, not we're mad," said Mr Howard. Certification, which, it is hoped, will be completed by 3am and not getting back until 4pm. "It's not an easy job and October, will not dramatically hike the price of their fish but a lot of people don't like docould guarantee a decent maring it," he said. He and ket throughout the season, Matthew Howard, another avoiding the occasional col-West Mersea fishermen, enlapses to 50p a stone, which thused about their methods being certified by the Marine make it not worth their while Stewardship Council. "When

— Nicholas Schoon Environment Correspondent

75.5

Spring time in Paris £85

THE INDEPENDENT INDERENDENT



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tle of champagne. Tickets £65pp.

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mous Opera Comique:

La Sonnambula - Vincenzo Bellini. The Passionate story of Amina - a young innocent girl, who during her sleep dreams of romance. Performing 25.29 & 30 April (starts 1930h). Tickets £52pp

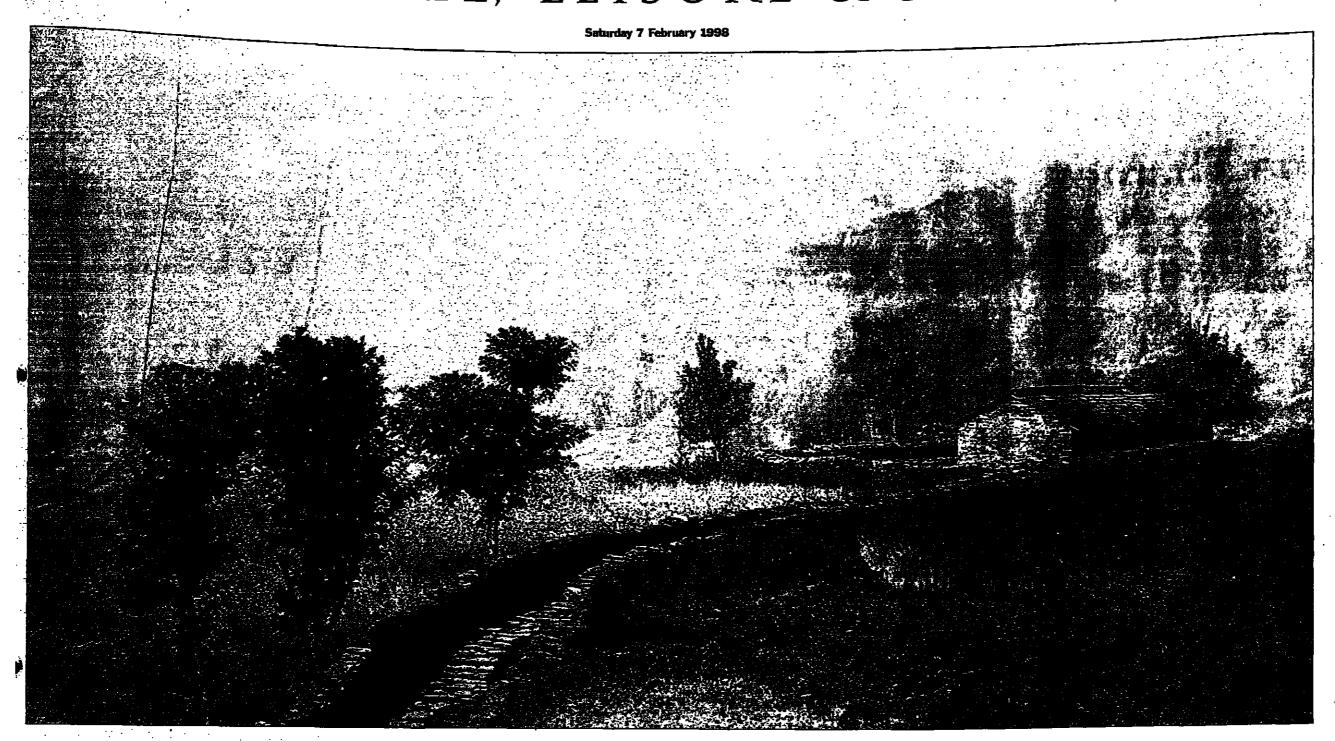
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Opera Comique

TRAVEL, LEISURE & SPORT



Prayer wheels and apple pie

Following the route of the holy Kali Gandaki river, Alysia Cook treks through the heart of the Himalayas.

come on holiday. This was one of them. I was freezing and wide awake, but dawn was still nine hours away. Half-way through a week's trek in Nepal, it was not the first time I regretted my choice of sleepingbag. The February days brought clear skies, bright sunshine and paths devoid of the large trekking groups that descend in autumn and spring, yet the nights were bitter.

Plenty of companies both in Britain and Nepal offer organised treks, but it is possible to make your own arrangements. We had decided to foilow the route of the holy Kali Gandaki river, high in the heart of the Himalayas, down to Pokhara, a peaceful lakeside town at the mountains' base. Acting on a tip from another trekker, we flew first by light air-

craft from Pokhara up to the isolated community of Jonson close to the Tibetan border.

are at the mercy of the fierce winds that gust up the valley, and trekkers who walk up, with the intention of flying down, can of-There are moments when you ten get stranded in Jomsom for rocky path to begin our descent. the top we would avoid this possibility. Our fellow passengers were mainly Thakalis, Tibetanblooded people who inhabit the upper valley. Whereas my companion and I had wrestled for a window seat, a Thakali woman across the aisle buried her head in her shawl throughout the flight, fixedly ignoring the dramatic scenery.

> Airborne, we passed deeplycleft mountains, first wrinkled with rice terraces, then cloaked in thickly layered forest and finally capped with snow. The plane's altimeter, visible through the open cockpit door,

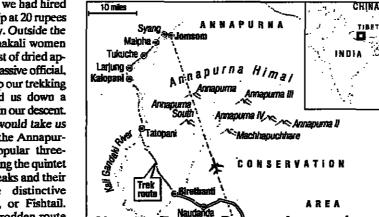
> nudged 9,000ft on landing. Deposited on the Tarmac at Jomsom, we found ourselves in a stark landscape with white summits piercing the skyline. The dawn cold still lingered in the air and we hastily donned

the down jackets we had hired in Pokhara - a snip at 20 rupees (about 20p) a day. Outside the Departures in both directions airport gates, Thakali women sold us a breakfast of dried apple rings. An impassive official, hovering to stamp our trekking permits, directed us down a

> along a third of the Annapur na Circuit, a popular threeweek trek encircling the quintet of Annapurna peaks and their neighbour, the distinctive Machhapuchare, or Fishtail. Today this well-trodden route is dubbed the "apple pie trail", a reference to the culinary comforts sold by the numerous trekking lodges lining the trail.

Only minutes into our trek, a young Nepalese woman approached us and, gesturing that she was alone, asked if she might walk with us. A quick look at the map established that she was heading for the community of Beni, some three days' walk away. So we set off in a threesome towards the first

village, Syang. She must have thought us very strange, stopping first to dig out gloves and hats; then



to adjust a rubbing strap; yet again to remove a layer of clothing. Clad in her thin shawl and sandals, she watched fascinated, exhibiting just the tiniest show of impatience if we dallied too long.

Less than 50 years ago the Kali Gandaki valley was a major trade route, where the Thakalis bartered grain, cloth and cigarettes with their Tibetan neighbours in return for salt, turquoise and wool. These merchants also profited by providing lodging for the passing

traders. Yet the decline in trade with Tibet after Chinese occupation, combined with competition from cheap Indian salt, forced them to seek alternative business. With the growth in tourism, many Thakalis converted their trader accommodation into trekking lodges. Stumbling into a cosy guest house after a day's walk, we had much cause to laud the Thakalis'

commercial adaptability. Finding accommodation was easy at this time of year, and we had our pick of the In the heartland of the Himalayas: rice terraces below the distinctive Machhapuchare, Photograph: Staffan Widstrand/Bruce Coleman or Fish Tail mountain

always stood out from the rest, marked by its superior first two days we trekked for jung with its hillside temples food, or a foot-warmer be- seven hours beneath laden and caves. Outside each village neath the dining-table. In rucksacks, and still only just would be a Buddhist chorten, Kalopani, we bade farewell to made it to our target village be- a stone pyramid lined with ກວ ເດກາກສກາເດກ ສກຕໍ spent our first night playing cards while the lodge owner's wife brought us plates of steaming rice, dhal and curious, fried Tibetan bread.

Most of the lodges are run by Thakali women, masterminding the tourist trade while their husbands work outside the valley. Unusually, the Kalopani Lodge owner happened to be at home. Unlike his quiet, traditionally clad wife, he was dressed in modern clothes and spoke perfect, businesslike English. He had not slept for 36 hours, having driven overnight from Kathmandu to Pokhara to catch the flight to Jomsom, then ridden straight to Kalopani. "I am a littie tired" was his understated reaction to the journey.

We found that reaching a lodge by sunset required a fair

walking capabilities. On the now faded and crumbling; Larfore dark While our lunes and prayer wheels, which we remuscles did toughen, it was impossible not to feel puny beside the barefoot locals who tramped past us carrying huge

Frequently we met mule or buffalo trains winding up the hill, kicking up clouds of dust in their wake. Although charming to look at, with their jangling bells and colourful loads, these beasts became distinctly less appealing when a passing rump pushed us to the edge of the trail, a steaming memento was deposited en route at our feet (though we were grateful for these natural markers later in the trek, when the path was obscured by a landslide).

The villages where we stopped for sustenance were from medieval times. Maipha, with its narrow paved streets; the once prosperous Tukuche,

lodges. Generally, one lodge degree of skill in estimating our its grand merchants' houses spectfully passed clockwise as custom required.

Indiana Jones-style, we crossed suspension bridges slung over cascading water, scrambled over landslides and climbed through cool forests. The broad valley at the start of the trail, roofed with blue skies and gleaming mountain peaks, softened miraculously into emerald ricefields and groves of orange and lemon trees. As the altitude changed so did our attitude towards comfort. Approaching the village of Tatopani, at 3,904ft, our anticipation mounted, for tato pari means hot water, or springs, and the place's reputation as an oasis for weary travellers is well deserved. After three days of icy sponge baths, soothing our aching limbs

Continued on page 2

INSIDE: Marrakesh/2

CITY BREAK SKIING

Day trips for enthusiasts/6 All downhill for Maier/4

WINTER OLYMPICS

RUGBY UNION

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SIMON CALDER.

In six days' time we will experience the first of this year's three Fridays the 13th. In February, March and November people will be touching wood, crossing fingers or simply staying in bed for fear of courting disaster. Some will be deterred from flying.

After Tuesday's horrific accident where a US military aircraft tore into a cable car at the Italian resort of Cavalese, killing 20 holiday-makers, reading Terry Denham's World Directory of Airliner Crashes may seem ghoulish. But this book reveals how relatively safe is aviation, and that, historically, Friday the 13th is no more nor less dangerous than any other day.

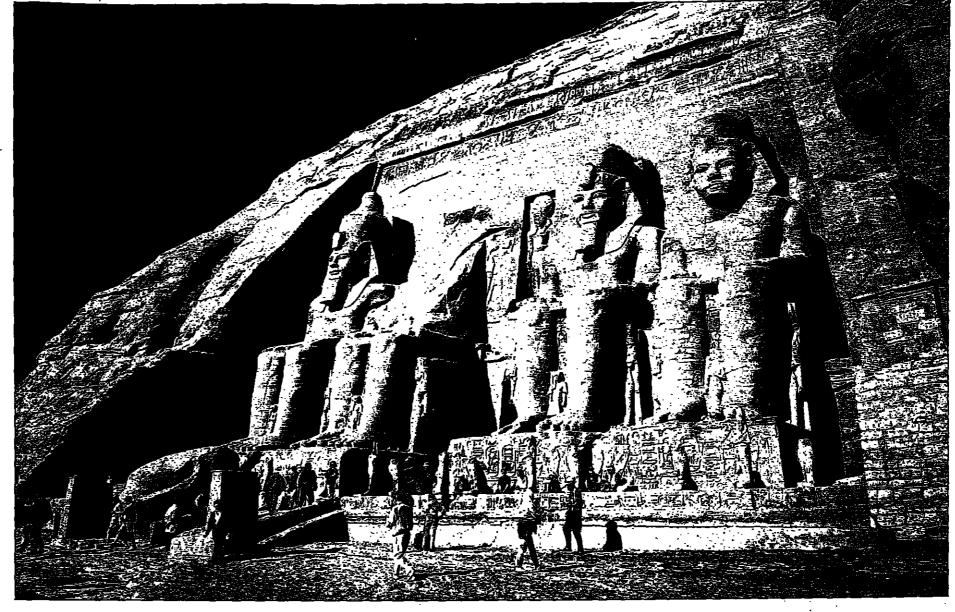
On average, four air travellers perish each day somewhere in the world. (Coincidentally, this is the same frequency as British people dying from accidental overdoses of opiates, according to Radio 4's Medicine Now.)

Airlines are loath to boast about safety records, for fear of tempting fate. Qantas, you will recall, was the airline that Dustin Hoffman's character insisted on flying in the film Rain Man, because of its clean safety record. Yet the Australian airline has had its fair share of prangs. Mr Denham records no fewer than 16 accidents, from a crash on take-off from Jericho, Queensland in 1923 to another crash on take-off in Mauritius in 1960. But the airline has never had an accident with a passenger fatality.

For the vast majority of us, the biggest disaster when flying is losing our luggage - or getting films wiped by airport security machines, as happened to the unfortunate BBC crew whose stock was blighted by an X-ray scanning machine at Manchester airport; their five-week filming assignment in Papua New Guinea was nullified by a single blast of radiation.

Permit me to write from the experience of my previous employment as a security guard at Gatwick. As the furious film-makers have now discovered, there are two kinds of airport X-ray machines. Those you see when passing through security controls are puny little devices, the equivalent of a Reliant Robin in terms of the radiation they generate; I happily watch camera film, magnetic tape and computer discs float down the conveyor belt and through the machine, confident that they will survive unscathed. Even the monstrous scanners at Sheremetyevo airport in Moscow have alled to dilit words or indages.

The stuff that goes on out of sight is a different matter. Ten years after the Lockerbie disaster, the aviation world is trying to make sure that explosives contained within hold baggage can be identified to avoid a repeat terrorist attack. Searching every bag by hand is a logistical impossibility - it used to be tricky enough checking everyone's luggage on the Belfast and Tel Aviv flights. The best alternative so far discovered is a machine called the CTX5000, a Juggernaut of the scanning world. Manchester is leading the world in screening every piece of checked baggage, and the BAA airports like Heathrow and Gatwick are not far behind. No security guard I know, past or present, would ever entrust any sensitive item to such rigorous screening - but then you should never, ever, check in anything you can't afford to lose.



Abu Simbel might be one of Egypt's most breathtaking sights, but while you're there ask your tour guide a few pertinent political questions

Photograph: Robert Harding Picture Library

Question time in the near East

Go and visit Petra, Jerusalem and Damascus, by all means. But while you're there, set the tour guides thinking - your remarks just could make a difference to human lives.

Back in the days of the Greek colonels, Labour ministers would appear on television - along with the exiled actress Melina Mercouri - urging British holiday-makers to avoid Greece and its islands. The regime in Athens was oppressing its own people, they said, banning free elections and torturing opponents. Tourism there would support the economy of a brutal dictatorship, the British were told. But today, despite moralistic "mission statements" from Robin Cook and his chums, the Foreign Office issues warnings about visiting only those countries in which Britons might be in danger - not the countries which might be a danger to their own people.

ioday, theretore, holida em Mediterranean without a thought for the evils that go on around their air-conditioned hotels and tour buses, unaware that their money is supporting regimes that have perfected the art of torture chairs. extrajudicial killing and fake elections. That's no reason not to visit them - if economic sanctions don't work in the Middle East, tourist sanctions certainly won't. But this doesn't mean you can't ask - politely. without intending to cause offence - about the less savoury aspects of the country into which you are pouring your hard-earned pounds. Here's a guide.

Turkey: Enjoy the beaches, the wine, the Topkapi museum. But why not ask that friendly tour guide what's happening in the forbidden south east? Is it true that thousands of Kurds have been "resettled" by the government, that hundreds have been mysteriously assassinated (by policemen as well as by the ruthless Kurdish Workers Party)? Why does Amnesty International carry repeated reports of police torture? And why aren't the Armenians mentioned in the local guidebook? Because there are

none left? (Answer: because the Turks massacred 1.5 million of them in the world's first genocide in 1915, but have never admitted it.)

Egypt: Take in the Pyramids by all means. And the Tutenkhamun treasures. Even Luxor, despite the recent massacre. But why not ask the tour guide to point out the Lazhough Street security police headquarters in central Cairo - systematic torture with electrodes is carried out against suspected militants on two floors of the building. If travelling outside the capital, ask the friendly guide where the Tora prison complex is - it's where opposition militants are given women's names and forced to rape each other as a punishment. If you're staying at the downtown Cairo As-Safir hotel, it's worth remembering that a previous guest, the Libyan exile Mansour Kikhiva, was last seen there in 1993 while attending a human rights conference; the Americans believe the Egyptian police kidnapped him and sent course, can find no trace of their visitor.

Jordan: The rose-red valley of Petra, the resort of Aqaba, are unbeatable. But you might ask why electoral laws were changed to keep Muslim opponents of the so-called peace process out of parliament, why dozens of political detainees are beld after unfair trials at the State Security Court, and why Jordan is hanging more of its citizens (including women) for crimes confessed to under fierce interrogation.

Israel/ Palestine: While enjoying Jerusalem, why not ask your Israeli tour guide to point out the Russian Compound where Palestinian prisoners have been brutally tortured and where torture (by "shaking") continues to this day? Ask the Palestinian merchants how many of their families have had their land taken by Israelis for Jewish settlements. Ask to visit the Jerusalem suburb of Givat Shaul and ask the locals what happened there (answer: the Jewish Irgun massacred Arab residents in 1948, when it was called Deir Yassin). If you're staying in the splendid King

David hotel, ask reception who blew it up in 1948 United Arab Emirates: There is swimming, desert (answer: Menachem Begin, when it was the British military HQ). In Hebron, ask local Palestinians why their forefathers massacred the Jewish inhabitants in the Twenties. And if you visit the nearest Jewish settlement, ask to see the grave of Baruch Goldstein, the Israeli who massacred 29 Palestinians in a Hebron mosque; his grave is now a shrine. In the Palestinian West Bank, you could ask local guides why Arafat pays no attention to his parliament, and why he maintains 14 different secret police forces. And

ROBERT FISK

when you see the PLO's police stations, ask why so many prisoners are beaten to death by Arafat's thugs. Aleppo's castle is spectacular, Roman Palmyra a joy. But you might ask, gently of course, who are the civilians with guns on so many street corners (answer: members of the various secret police units). Ask the voting pattern of the latest election for the government (be sure we're talking percentages in the high nineties). In Palmyra, glance across towards the hills on the other side of town and ask what the long, low buildings are (answer: Tadmor prison, site of a massacre of inmates by special forces troops in 1982). And while traveiling north, if you stop to see the beautiful houses of ancient Hama, you might ask why there are so many bullet holes in them (answer: Syrian troops ruthlessly suppressed an Islamist uprising here; original figures of 20,000 dead may be exaggerated, but it was a bloody business). Syrian officials may say that the rebels of Hama were cutting the throats of families loyal to the government and threatened an Islamic revolution - and that if the uprising had not been crushed, Syria would have become another Algeria. They may well be right - but there's no harm in asking.

exploration, gambling and lots of money, especially in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. But over a G&T you might ask your Emirates friends how many young Sri Lankan and Filipino women have been viciously flogged for supposedly "illicit" sexual relations in recent years (answer: hundreds). And what happened to the Sri Lankan teenager in the emirate of Ras al-Khaimar who was convicted (despite her claim to innocence) of killing the baby she was looking after? (Answer: she was shot by a firing squad just before her 19th birthday.)

Of course, I've left out the non-holiday spots. In Baghdad, you're likely to be invited to visit the torture chamber for a prolonged stay, if you ask about it. In Saudi Arabia, you'll be put on the first plane home if you complain about the regular public decapitation of convicted prisoners on Friday mornings.

Even those old, perennial tourist haunts Tunisia and Morocco are worthy of a few questions. In both countries, opponents of the rulers regularly "disappear" - in Morocco for up to 30 years; and why, you might ask the waiter in your favourite Tunisian restaurant, does he always seem to be hanging around your table when you talk politics?

Be assured, you will be told everywhere you go that the President/ King is both popular and godlike, beloved by his people, ruling benignly under God's heaven. Your tour guide will absolutely insist that this is his own personal conviction. But when you have gone, he will report all this to the authorities. who might - just might - worry that pulling out local fingernails could reduce the millions they make from

If you do ask questions, remember, too, that your tour guide will also love his country, and be deeply offended if he thinks you are trying to insult him. But even if you don't ask any questions, why not read Amnesty International's latest human rights report on the country you plan to tan in? It never hurts to know where your money is going.

Prayer wheels and apple pie

Continued from page 1

in the steaming pools rated almost as highly as the sight of the peaks above us.

From here on, the landscape grew ever more tropical, although the nights held on to their chill. At Ghorepani, we shivered out of bed before dawn to climb Poon Hill, which promised spectacular views across the Himalayas - only to find the mountain panorama obscured by cloud.

A decade ago, visitors were spared half the climb by staying in lodges on the hillside. The resulting deforestation, especially from increased consumption of firewood - persuaded the local environmental body, the Annapurna Conservation Area Project, to move the lodges lower down and encourage owners to install back-boilers or solar panels. Trekkers are also asked to keep water pollution and litter to a minimum.

The last village on the trek was Birethanti, once an isolated community, now a thriving trekking town. The new road from Pokhara to Jomsom has climbed here, extending "civilisation" but gradually smothering a traditional way of life. When it finally reaches Jornsom the rich diversity of the land-



Yakking on: rush hour on a Nepalese hill path Photograph: Bruce Coleman

scape, so thrilling on a six-day walk, will flash by in less than a day's drive and the villages in its path may lose most of their tourist trade. Can the ingenuity of the Thakalis once again rise to the challenge?

The only airline with direct flights between the UK and Nepal is Royal Nepal (0171-494 (1974), but these flights stop at least twice en route. Fares are lower, and stops may be fewer on airlines such as Qatar Airlines via Doha (£515 through Thomas Cook Flights Direct, 0990 101520).

Red tape Visas are required by all British passport holders. A one-month visa can be obtained on arrival for US\$30-\$35 (£18-£21, but you must pay in US dollars). To obtain one in advance, send an sae to the Visa Section, Embassy of Nepal, 12a Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8 4QU (0171-229 1594).

Headless horsemen on the Welsh border



Skirting round the Severn Bore, Matthew Brace continues his series on great short railway journeys by taking the train from Gloucester to Chepstow.

The ticket-collector on the through train from Birmingham to Milford Haven leapt from his carriage at Gloucester with a smile on his face.

"See them?" he asked a colleague waiting on the platform. "There, them two skinnyhead boys walking off now. Got them both at Cheltenham,

No ticket, no money, full fine." He was clearly delighted with busting the two faredodgers, who strode away with a story of bravado to tell their mates. So pleased was he with himself that he didn't bother Bristol Channel. This is where by 1069. The fact that the cas-

train at Gloucester for our tickets. Instead he breezed through the carriages whistling and answering queries. Yes, but no, he didn't have a timetable to give out.

We pulled out of Gloucester at 13.42, passing through the western suburbs and then across the fertile farmland of the Severn river valley. Stately, brick farmhouses line the route, many built on slight rises in the ground, presumably to give their owners a bit more time to get out the sandbags when the river floods.

Inland, on the edge of the Forest of Dean but sadly out of sight from the train track, is Littledean Hall, reputedly Britain's most haunted house. with far more than its fair share of headless horsemen and white ladies. The house is built on the site of a Roman temple, which may have something to do with the excessive paranormal activity. It is privately owned, but you can vis-

it from April to October. Ten minutes out of Gloucester, the line meets the north bank of the river as it flows into its estuary at the head of the

certain times of the year. The earth and timber illustrates its Bore, or wave, is a geographical phenomenon that occurs at high tides, producing a wall of the train did stop at Lydney, water up to a metre (3ft) high which moves unstream at between 16km and 19km an hour (about 11mph). Some fear it. others surf it. At low tide old wooden jetties are visible reaching out from the shore, their struts coated in seawced

> and slime. From Lydney, the first stop, you can take the Heritage Railway. There are special events throughout the year including, for kids, Friends of Thomas and Teddy Bear week-

After Lydney the train runs on to Chepstow (Cas-Gwent in Welsh), only another nine minutes down the line. The dramatic approach to this Welsh border town is across a high bridge over the river Wye looking across to Chepstow Castle. Built on a rock above the river, this is the earliest stone castle in Britain which can be accurately dated. The Domesday Book in 1086 records that it was begun by William fitz Osbern, who had taken up his post as

the Norman Earl of Hereford

asking any of us who joined the the Severn Bore is visible at the is made of stone rather than great strategic importance in controlling one of the main

crossings into Wales. The castle is well preserved, with many original features, and there is a small exhibition there that gives you a sense of how tough life was for most people in those days, what with wars, poverty and everpresent plagues. However, for the rich things were different. Royal and noble visitors to the castle would have dined on fine, exotic game. A typical meal for King Edward L who dropped in in December 1285, included boar's head, heron, cygnet, peacocks, curlew, and

iced eggs for pudding. And what better place for the king and his entourage to walk it all off, than along the battlements? The view is breathtaking. The castle sits on high cliffs above a gentle horseshoe bend of the Wye, which flows idly by 200ft below. The town's position near the confluence of the Wye and the Severn estuary meant that it was always likely to become a key port. Wine from Bordeaux and fish from Iceland were brought

from the same dockside in 1840, after their uprising in

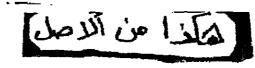
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Newport. Maybe it is the history of international trade that has always made me see Chepstow as a transitory sort of place. It is on the way to lots of places. I remember it as a fish-and-chip stop, coming home from childhood holidays in South Wales. Today the biggest chippie in town must be Payton's Plaice beside the main crossroads, with seating for 60, though the lunch time I dropped in, the other 59 guests were dining elsewhere - maybe at a newly opened fast food joint serving heron and iced eggs to go.

On the footplate When to go: open all year (nine trains each weekday, 10 on Saturday, seven on Sunday) What to see: Littledean Hall, Chepstow Castle, cheap day return (Gloucester to Chepstow) adult £5.30, children under 15, £2.65.

Who to call: Wales and West trains (0345 484950), Talking Timetable for Friends of Thomas and Teddy Bear weekends (01594 843423), Gloucestershire Tourist Board (01452 ashore here, and the Chartists 421188). Chepstow Tourist were deported to Tasmania Board (01222 500200).



120

bed

48 hours in the life of Marrakesh



Hanging out: in Marrakesh, most of your time will be spent exploring the Medina, and here it is easiest to walk through the maze of alleys and markets

landscape.

rod and line.

other vulnerable features of the

You can pick wild berries,

they are not protected species.

for any length of time.

mushrooms and flowers, provided that

close to houses, and you must ask the

landowner for permission to pitch a

group of tents, or to stay in one place

and archipelagos is allowed only with

Free fishing along Sweden's coasts

But you are requested not to camp

Photo: Penny Tweedie/Panos

You need a shortcut to the for a double) but for that unsoul of Morocco's most entertaining city. Jeffrey Lee prescribes the perfect weekend there.

Why go now?

Because February is dry, clear otic world just three hours away.

Beam down

British Airways (0345 222111) Take a hike and Royal Air Maroc (0171-439 4361) fly from Gatwick and Heathrow respectively to Maragents such as Hamilton Travel (0171-344 3344) you can get turn; booking direct can cost £100 more,

Get your bearings

Marrakesh is in fact two cities side by side. The walled old city, or Medina, is a bustling warren of winding bazaars and medieval buildings, centred around the colourful square of Djma Al-Fna and the towering minaret of the Koutoubiya mosque; the new town, the Nouvelle Ville, is all modern blocks, broad boulevards and French colonial town planning, built around the wide Place de la Liberté. The two city centres are connected by the wide thoroughfare of the Avenue Muhammad Cinq.

The small airport is just a few kilometres away and a taxi to either town centre should cost about 60 dirhams (£4). Make sure you agree a fare in advance. of meat or vegetables cooked in Within Marrakesh, taxis tend to a conical day pot with lemons, use their meters, and it is very hard for a trip to cost more than about 70 pence.

Most of your time will be spent exploring the Medina, and here it is easiest to walk through or travel by horse-drawn carriage. Again, fix a price in advance. From the old city walls to the Djma al-Fna costs about 70 pence. Ignore the "guides" hard to navigate the bazaars, and if you want to be guided you can hire an official guide through your hotel. For about £10 for a half-day you can get someone who is reliable and knowledgeable, and will keep off the touts.

Check in

There are plenty of cheap hotels around the central Dima al-Fna, the most popular being the Tazi and the Foucauld. I wouldn't recommend any of them. There are plenty of "international" five-stars in the Nouvelle Ville. I wouldn't recommend them, either. My two tips are both close to the centre of the Medina: the Club Med (00 212 4 44 4016) strangely ignored by all the guidebooks I've ever read on Marrakesh, is a haven with idiosyncratic rooms, a great pool and a hammam (traditional Moroccan sauna). You don't have to join in kitsch French cabaret, and it's great value at about £30 for a double room; in the fantasy range there is the palatial Mamounia (00 212 4 44 89 81), Winston Churchill's favourite holiday retreat, one of those rare fabled hotels that lives up to its reputation. Opulent and expensive (from about £140

forgettable 48 hours.

To get a feel for the place, hire a carriage at the Djma Al-Fna and ride out through the heat and hustle of the Medina to make a half-circuit of the walls. and warm (average 20°C). Be- The air is cool in the paim cause the towering High Atlas groves around the city and the Amidst streams of people you mountains provide a snow- mud ramparts and towers go capped backdrop to a vibrant, expink in the dusty sunlight. Reenter the walls from the south, And because Ramadan is over, beside the mirror-smooth Menara pieasure lake.

Leave the carriage by the forbidden palace of the ruling Sultan Hassan and visit the Al-Badi rakesh. Through discount ("The Incomparable") Palace. Open 9am-12 and 2.30-5.30pm. This is the vast ruin of a 16tha farc of around £250-£260 re- century complex so luxurious that it took the mad Sultan Ismail 10 years to strip out its gold, marble and jewels. Now you can explore the (scary, unlit) dungeons and wander through the echoing courtyards and roofless pavilions where huge white storks nest. Next door, after passing through a narrow turnnel, you'll find the necropolis of the Saadian dynasty. Sealed off and forgotten until the French opened it up in 1917, it is a tranquil place with beautifully tiled and carved tombs.

> Lunch on the run For about £2 a head, the

Venezia, on a terrace overlooking the Koutoubiya mosque, offers a good view, fast, friendly service and local beer. It serves pizzas and local specialities such as couscous and tajeen - a stew prunes or olives.

Cultural afternoon

The best place to soak up Marrakesh culture is in the streets and bazaars, but to get a feel of the maze of alleys and markets, traditional Moroccan arts and Si Said (open 9am-12, 2.30-6pm). This is a sumptuous house, built in the last century for the "simple" brother of a who hassle you as you walk wealthy courtier. It now contains through the Medina. It isn't a museum of Moroccan arts £25 per head).

(the carpet displays are especially fine).

لمكذا من ألاصل

Window shopping This is the best reason to come to Marrakesh - to wander the markets or souqs. There is a around the Dima Al-Pna, with each trade having its own bazaar. pass through clusters of stalls specialising in slippers, leather, spices, perfumes and metalwork. In one square, you find traditional medicine stalls selling rare Bracing brunch

roots, dead crows, dried chameleons and other supposedly magical ingredients. In another, all sorts of multicoloured baskets. Best buys in the sougs are ceramics, silver, woodwork, and, of course, carpets. There are no prices marked

and you must bargain for everything. When bargaining for an expensive item, I recommend an initial offer of about onetenth the vendor's asking price. Don't be afraid if he oohs and aahs and acts offended. That's all part of the ritual; he will come back with a lower price. Drink the mint tea that is offered (without any obligation to buy) and take your time. You can always go away and come back later. I once bargained with a carpet merchant, on and off, over the whole of a long weekend.

An aperitif

Take a break from the entropy of the old city and drink a pastis, or a local rosé, at one of the relaxed, French-style caféterraces in the Nouvelle Ville. Café Les Négociants.

Demure dinner In the Nouvelle Ville, the and story-tellers mingle with French-run Rôtisserie de la Berber dancing boys, fire-eaters Paix (68 rue Yugoslavie) has a and snake-charmers. Dozens of cosy fire for winter and a gar- food stalls are set up and the den for summer. It does French spicy smell of sizzling merguez and Moroccan food for about sausages fills the air. Brightly-lit crafts, it is worth visiting the Dar £8, and specialises in grills. For stalls around the square's edge a blow-out, try Yacout. You will be met by a guide and taken to and oranges to squeeze right a spectacular town house in the then and there. Take a seat in

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Sunday morning: go to

Non-Muslims are banned from mosques in Morocco, but you can visit the medieval religious schools, or madrasas. The most beautiful is the intricately tiled crowded maze of passages and carved Madrasa Ben Yousef, to the north of the Djma al-Fna. In the same area, you can admire (from the outside) the ornate shrines of two Muslim saints and the glorious Mouassin mosque.

The best place is Pergola in the Nouvelle Ville on the south side of Place de la Liberté. For a couple of quid you get a generous Continental or American breakfast in a pleasant pavement setting. At the more basic MikMak, on Place Foucauld, they do a reasonable croissant and coffee for 50 pence.

A walk in the park

Marrakesh has a number of public gardens, some of which date back to medieval times, but the two best are private. The Jardin Majorelle is Yves St Laurent's garden in the Nouvelle Ville (entrance £1). Cool and leafy, it is full of flowers, with fountains and courtyards brightly painted to match. In the grounds of the Hotel Mamounia, groves of oranges are crisscrossed by shady formal walkways, lined with silver olives. The paths are draped with bougainvillaea and scented with iasmine and lemon blossom.

The icing on the cake Evening in the Dima Al-Fna is Try the Renaissance or the a unique and literally magical experience. Circles of onlookers fill the wide square, where fortunetellers, faith-healers, conjurers are piled high with nuts, dates heart of the Medina for a trad- one of the cafés alongside the itional Moroccan feast (about throng, order a café au lait and watch a medieval world go by.

NEXT WEEKEND.

GREEN CHANNEL

Sweden's right of public access

Travellers in Sweden benefit from the best access rights anywhere in Europe. The new Sweden 98 book (available free from the 24-hour request line, 01476 578811) explains the country's

tradition of allemanstätten. You are allowed to walk, jog, ride, cycle or ski through the forests and countryside and across other people's land, provided you don't cause any damage to crops, tree plantations or

RED CHANNEL

Warnings about Sweden in the new State Department bulletin

Most crimes involve theft of personal property in public areas, or burglary from cars or residences. However, travellers, especially those who appear affluent, can become targets of pickpockets and bagsnatchers. Hotel breakfast rooms and lobbies, in particular, attract professional, well-dressed thieves who blend in with guests.

The maximum speed limit in Sweden is 110km per hour (65mph). Laws, especially those concerning speeding and driving under the influence of alcohol, are strictly enforced, and fines can be severe. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Sweden are high, and convicted offenders can expect jail sentences

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A race for the upwardly mobile

it's a vertical marathon: every February in New York athletes gather to race up the 86 floors of the world's third tallest building. Martin Holder joined the Empire State Run Up.

New York took my breath away as well as most of my stomach contents. Being violently sick at the top of the "Eighth Wonder of the World" is undoubtedly one of the most memorable things I have done. I wanted my trip to the Big Apple to be unforgettable. So I ran up the Empire State Building instead of using the

Every year 180 upwardly-mobile and perhaps mentally unbalanced athletes take part in the Empire State Run Up. It is the oldest of an ever-growing worldwide circuit of vertical marathons: Sydney, Moscow, Vienna, Munich, Toronto and Detroit all host their own vertical marathons and they are open to anyone keen to achieve something most people are too sensible to do. By running up the world's third tallest building, I wanted to scale new heights of achievement for British athletics, as well as British holiday-makers to New York.

The Empire State Building run takes you up 86 floors - a total of 1,576 40-inch wide, half-inch-high steps. The race begins in the lobby - on 36th Street and Fifth Avenue - and ends on the observatory dock on the 86th floor. My race began three months earlier, up and down the staircase in my home in Blackheath. Practice facilities were rather low on the ground in London, but I did not let the lack of skyscrapers interfere with my train-

Step on it: the Empire State Run Up is the oldest of an ever-growing world-wide circuit of vertical

in passing something about my suffering floor to floor. The Empire State Run is from a bladder infection.

I then moved on to a local multi-storey car park, progressing on to the maintenance stairwell of Woolwich Tunnel. I run marathons and have run a few crosscountry races - but vertical marathons, I had been told, require work on certain muscle groups. Presumably not the brain.

Raising money for Save The Children and the Catherine Wyatt Fund (set up in memory of a university friend who died suddenly) was my main motivation, as well as going to New York and seeing it from a different perspective - on the run, without the use of yellow cabs or the subway.

Arriving in the city, my training schedule continued with jogs around Central Park, down Broadway and Wall Street, past Macy's and right down to the Statue of Liberty - as well as workouts on the treadmill and step-up machine in the Manhattan Sheraton. I also ran up and down the hotel's 26-storey stairs. On one occasion, guests flooded out of their rooms in my wake thinking that there was a fire drill.

On the big day, I signed in paid my £10 race fee, collected my singlet and lined up at the start. The pros went first and the race was won for the third successive year by Kurt Konig, a 39-year-old accountant from Mittenwald in Germany. He is the undisputed King of the Maintenance Stairwells. His winning time of 10 minutes 22 seconds was just four seconds outside the all-time record set by Australian Greg Case. The best women's time is around 12-and a-half-minutes. This is held by an Australian, Belinda

I had no idea of what time would be respectable. I just wanted to finish without the aid of paramedics and with blisters that would not prevent me from al air route in the world, and since the start

shopping the next day. went, shoulder-barging each other out of are on Continental from Gatwick, the way in the huge crush, a desperate Heathrow, Birmingham or Manchester

ing. I ran up and down my 12-step stair- all the way. I had expected a nosebleed case 500 times a day. My neighbours were or a stitch but all I got was sore thumbs tolerant. My wife, Fiona, had mentioned from swinging around the handrail from essentially a road race with handrails.

Whizzing around the corners, I caught sight of the Manhattan skyline from a 360degree perspective. It was a curious and novel way of sightseeing. The run is no great distance. Only a fifth of a mile and 1,050ft up. At the end you don't run into the arms of a loved one or trainer, but those of a small man dressed in a rather mangy gorilla suit. Apart from a congratulatory cuddle from King Kong, all you get for your exertions is a not-verynice complimentary T-shirt, a tiny, tacky trophy, a Swatch, a sticky bun for your blood-sugar level, complimentary rehydration in a wobbly paper cup and an allexpenses ride down to ground level in the

I finished 56th, in a time of just under 16 minutes - 13 minutes faster than the oldest man in the race, 85-year-old-Chico Sourone. The view from the top was more breathtaking than usual. As I gulped for air, and the rest of the runners filed away towards the lift. I looked up to see the man who runs the souvenir shop on the observatory floor shaking his head disconsolately. His name is Douglas. "These stair climbers are my worst customers. They never buy nothing."

I felt terrible, and my recovery period was rather noisy. But slowly the ultimate holiday high began to sink in and make itself feit. I could have gone faster and overtaken more people, but I have been brought up to believe that it is bad luck to cross on stairs.

The 1998 Empire State Run takes place on 22 February: for more information call 001 212 860 4455.

Getting there: London-New York is the busiest and most competitive internationof the year fares have fallen to their low-The starting pistol fired and off we est ever in real terms. Most of the best deals attempt to get to the small-framed door for as little as £170 return (including all taxto the staircase. Then it was stair crazy es, through discount agents).

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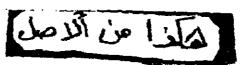
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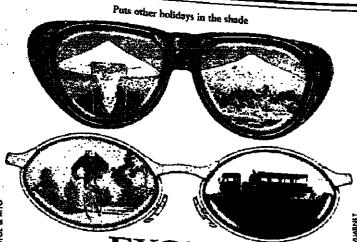
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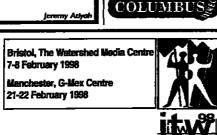
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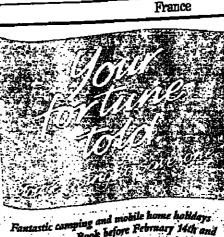
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A fanatic's guide: how to fill 24 hours with snow

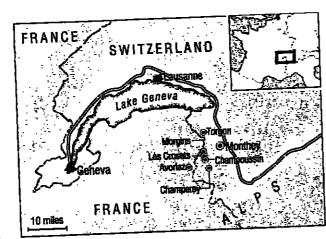
Only dedicated enthusiasts might consider a day's skiing trip to the Alps. But, writes Richard Holledge, it's not as difficult or as expensive as you may think.

There's nothing worse than a ski bore. God, how they go on. Banging on about black runs and blue runs, ripping up the powder, cruising through the bumps. Then they get on to skis: the relative values of Salomon P Force 9 as compared with Volkl P 30 Race Carvers, and the sheer excitement of slipping into rear-entry boots.

But they are a mere subening their skis and dulling vertigo - but there are other the conversation. So this is for them: the Ultimate Day Trip.

It works like this: depart London Heathrow at 6.30am (or Manchester at 6.35am), arrive Zurich take the bus to Engelherg, get your gear, grab the lift pass, ski like a lunatic, get the bus, catch the plane and be back in time for bed. Cost: £160.

It's a clever bit of marketing



for us bores and fanatics and Crosets, Morgins and Torgon. will no doubt sell comme des gâteaux chauds, particularly as the snow conditions this year

Engelberg is a nice place places just as easy to get to for a quick ski. Take the Portes du Soleil. This vast area, with 13 or 14 resorts and infinite kilometres of pistes, straddles France and Switzerland and is as little as an hour and 20 minutes from Geneva.

There's a quartet of Swiss resorts which fit the bill: Champéry, Champoussin, Les

The drive is mostly by motorway - and fast. They all have their qualities. Champéry is pretty, Les Crosets and Champoussin more functional The only time they talk is when it has a revolving cable car, and Morgins slightly more they are on a chair lift. In the which must be disconcerting for cosmopolitan. Certainly the as the Chavanettes. Plenty of those who tend to suffer from bar next to the chair-lift car time to catch the 8pm home. serves a very potable house Fendant, the local wine, in elegant, fluted carafes. Torgon is stuck out on a limb, but links, as they all do, with other resorts. The skiing you see from your front door bears no relation to the huge variety that lies up the lift, over the mountain and

down the next valleys. To get the most skiing on your one-day jaunt, head for just go for the day. Go for 24

Les Crosets. It links with the neighbouring communes of Champéry and Champoussin and, more important, with the area's biggest ski domain, Avo-

So this is how it goes for bores and fanatics. Take the 8am Swissair flight from Heathrow, arrive Geneva at 10_30am, pray for fast baggage reclaim - better still, keep everything in your hand luggage and leave the skis behind - pick up the hire car, which was booked in advance, and reach Les Crosets by 12.30pm. Pick up the gear from the hire shop in Hôtel de la Télécabine, and you'll be up the cable car and away by 1pm. If you don't make a stop for lunch you can ski solidly until about 4.30pm, including a bracing challenge down the very steep run known

rushed. The fact is that a little lunch in a mountain restaurant is one of the pleasures of life. It seems a shame to whiz past La Crémaillerie in the Lindarets area without stopping for its plat du jour. All blanquette de veau, rosti, tarte aux myrtilles and the local red.

There is a solution. Don't

Ten kilometres of piste above Les Crosets and Champéry are under floodlight. It means that instead of having to

when you can't see farther than the end of your skis, you've no idea where you are and, unnervingly, you often feel you are moving when in fact you are stationary, up to your knees in

There is also something of awaited. v atmosphere to night skiing. A schuss and a few turns from the top find you in Coquoz restaurant. Inside, a central fire blazes away, slightly chilled skiers toast their toes and warm themselves with vin chaud, and families tuck in to crudites and mountains of raclette - melted cheese with boiled potatoes. The more dedicated contem- for double rooms from £45.

plate the impressive wine list, which boasts 35 local wines.

affair, and we tumbled into the Hôtel Télécabine in Les Crosets, where a late dinner

5.30am to catch the 7.50am flight home, but that's a small price to pay for a bore and a

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hours. And don't just ski in the day. Ski in the night.

stop skiing when the lifts stop. at about 4.30pm, you can keep going until 10pm. And what's more, the ski pass costs the It is a strange sensation swaying up the mountain on one of the four chair lifts in the

dark, and odder still picking your way down the shadowy slopes. In fact, it's a lot easier than the dreaded white-out you get during foggy days,

for the slopes The slide back to the moun-

above Champery and tain was a particularly carefree Les Crosets Photographs: Jonathan

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OK, you have to get up at

Didn't we have a lovely

day ...

What are the options for skiing day trips from Britain? Simon Calder offers some suggestions.

Gatwick airport, last Monday morning. Cathy Packe, one of our skiing writers, was hoping to take off on a £149 day-trip to Chamonix. "Up to six hours' skiing in the French Alps", promised Airtours. But she was told in advance that the trip would not be running, and signed up instead for a longer holiday, from which she has yet to return. Yet the cancellation

of the day-trip (and the consequent loss of this week's planned skiing story) was the spur for a survey of the options for one-day skiers. Do you have to be mad, or fantastically rich, or both, to go skiing for the day? The answer turns out to be

Candidate for the best travel bargain of the year so far is a little-known offer from Manchester or Heathrow for a day

in the Swiss Alps. While Airtours earned lots of publicity for its first venture into one-day skiing, the Switzerland Travel Centre (0171-734 4577) has quietly introduced a day trip that offers six hours' skiing plus scheduled flights to Zurich, transfers to the resort of Engleberg (perfectly respectable, and mercifully close to Zurich airport), ski hire and lift pass - for a total of just £175 from Manchester, £160 from Heathrow. This deal, valid on Saturdays and Sundays, in-

voted best short-haul airline by Executive Travel magazine. Given that the normal air

fare for a day trip from Manchester costs £532, I called the airline to check that the story was correct. "Yes, all true." says Richard Castle, Swissair's marketing manager. "We introduced early flights from the UK [6.30am from Heathrow, five minutes later from Manchester] for business travellers. At weekends, we're taking advantage of the lower demand to cludes travel on Swissair, just create a new product for

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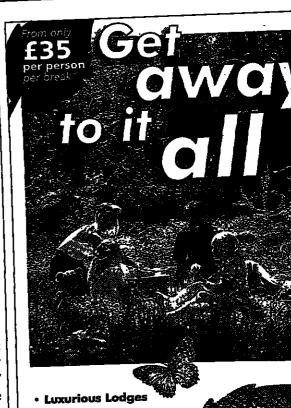
There are other options for the cash-rich, time-poor skier. Richard Holledge, above, describes the 24-hour experience; but if you want to get some skiing in without encroaching on the working day, it helps to aim

Those based in south-east England can take advantage of the overnight sleeper from London Euston to Aviemore on Scotrail (0345 550033). Departing at 9.30am gets you there at 7.50am. You can spend the day on the slopes, and the evening sampling the (admittedly limited) apres-ski before climbing aboard the same train at 9.25pm. arriving back in Euston at 7.47am next morning, in time for a day at the office. The fare is a reasonable £99 - with one catch. You have to book this deal a week in advance, which, given the uncertainties of Scottish snow, may not be ideal.

In the other direction the chances look better. The nearest serious Continental snowfields (leaving aside Belgium, favoured by our writer Stephen Wood but sadly few others) are in the Vosges, featured in these pages a fortnight ago. Although it's not the Alps, it's better than the Grampians.

You could, in theory, drive through the night from a French Channel port to the region in around six hours, making it possible to step from car to slope for the day before returning the same evening. With cross-Channel fares by ferry or tunnel so low, this is probably the cheapest option of all - and definitely the most reckless.

Meanwhile, when Cathy Packe returns, she will be pleased to learn that Airtours (01706 232324) is going ahead with a day trip to Chamonix for £149. From Manchester, in

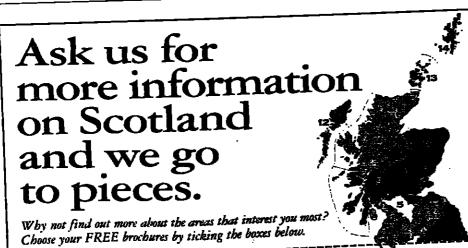


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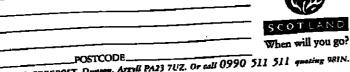




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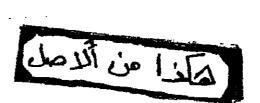
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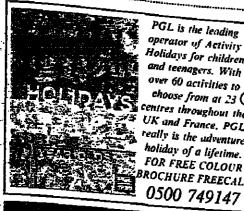
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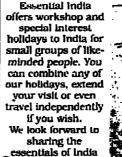
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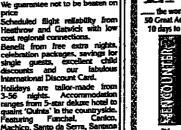
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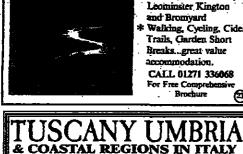
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The precise science of a great sleepover party

Not many people have slept in space. But every month more than 100 children lie in the darkness gazing at the the Apollo 10 Command module.

Fiona Macaulay joins Science Night at the Science Museum in London.

The excitement is palpable as children between the ages of eight and 11 arrive for an evening of activities at the Science Museum, after which they bed down in sleeping-bags in three of the main galleries; Space, Power and Shipping. The idea of sleepovers in museums originated in the United States in the Seventies. The Science Museum broke the ground in Britain in 1993 and since then a few others have followed suit, most recently the British Museum.

At the Science Museum, each sleepover night has a theme, such as Stars and Space, or Travel and Journeys. The one I attended was themed on the senses. Children come in groups of between five and 30, with an adult accompanying every five children of the same sex.

When the hordes arrive the first thing they do is set up camp. Boys and girls are separated into "dormitories". On the night of my visit the boys' side was a scrummage of sleeping-bags that had been hastily dumped down. The girls, however, laid out pyjamas in neat piles on their pillows, alongside cuddly toys.

Once bivouacked, the children can look round the galleries or participate in the "Science Stops", a series of small, hands-on experiments. They powered a propeller into flight by attaching it to a deflating balloon, and a tin bird was made airborne by an elastic band mechanism.

Then the welcome and safety talk began. This may sound rather dull, but it is in fact where the theatrical

part of the evening starts. We met some of the world's most historic SAM, the Safety Android Mecha-aeroplanes are suspended from the nism, dressed in a silver space suit. He spoke to us in a strange sci-fi dialect and warned us that if we did not heed him "it might result in removal of my powerpack and my being melted down to make a vacuum cleaner".

The next theatrical experience was listening to a scientist, Peter "Things are not always what they

This was made clear through a scries of simple experiments, one of which involved sticking labels on our word "speed" on them, which resulted in an assortment of strange mirror-writing characters.

An Inspector Clouseau-type character was the star of the next part of the evening, entitled "Solve It!". Dressed in belted raincoat and trilby hat, she stalked amongst the audience to reveal the facts of a crime. We were told that an object had been stolen from the museum and that we must discover what it was, where it had been stolen from and the route that the thief took to escape. The only clues were those provided by a visually impaired witness. Miss Philpot. Using our senses, excluding sight, we tried to decipher the answers from her story.

After taxing our brains in this session we then had to exercise our manual skills to make our own camera obscura. I was completely taken aback to find that this could be achieved with no more than a cardboard tea box, a piece of tracing paper and some Sellotape. During this workshop it was also explained how the eye sees, and the way in which the camera obscura mimics this process.

Theatricals returned for the final event of the evening. The backdrop was the spectacular Flight Gallery, along the "Tiptoe Tester" (a vibra-

In this darkened, cavernous hall everyone was gathered together for the first time, and the excitement was electric. I wondered how any of these children were ever going to settle down to sleep.

Above us on a raised walkway appeared an actor dressed for are-Barham, explain to us about illusions: tic conditions as the legendary Clarence Birdseye, pioneer of massproduced frozen food. He talked about survival techniques at sub-zero temperatures and the Inuit people: "Eskimo means raw-flesh-eater. foreheads and trying to write the That's not a very nice name to call someone. They call themselves lnuit, meaning super-race."

Amazingly enough, the children did go to sleep quite quickly after this. Apparently that is not always the case, and the adult contingent can be kept awake till the early hours of the morning.

After breakfast the next morning it was back to the spectacular flight gallery for a quiz trail on the history of flight. This was a good way of starting the day, as there was lots of space to wander round in your own party without bumping into other people. Plenty of time was given to having a good look around and to completing the answers.

Thank goodness for the gentle start (not that the children seemed to be bothered) before our visit to "Launchpad", where we were to be "launched into science". Never have I seen so much frenetic activity so early in the morning as there was in this diverse, hands-on gallery. Bodies struck dramatic poses in the "Shadow Box" when a light flashed. leaving dark shadows against a luminous green background on the screen in the cubicle. This is because the phosphors on the screen store up the energy of light. Others crept where "birdmen", balloonists and tion detector) or powered by hand



Sleeping exhibition: once a month children aged between eight and il spend a night at the Science Museum

Photograph: Richard Kating

a grain pit which lifts the corn by turning an Archimedes screw.

There are so many different things to try at Launchpad that after a three-quarter-hour session the children almost had to be frogmarched out, so reluctant were they to leave. Taking a straw poll amongst the children, this came out as a favourite, along with the mind-twisting "Solve It!" session.

Finally, prize-giving brought everything to a close, with books awarded for the best drawings of the evening and for the winners of a quiz on the night's activities. After this official end to science night, the children were allowed to stay in the museum for the day, with the bonus of free admission to the new Science of Sport exhibition. Relief troops of parents began to arrive to take over their still-energetic charges, and to hear excited chatting about the night's events. I admitted defeat, and went home to bed.

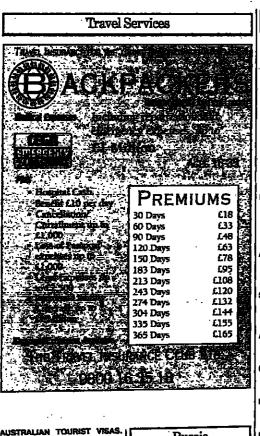
Science Night takes place once a month and costs £20 per child and £18 per adult. For details contact the Science Night Office at the Science Mu-

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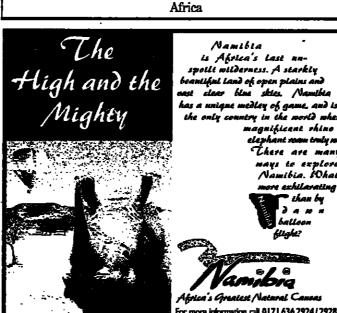
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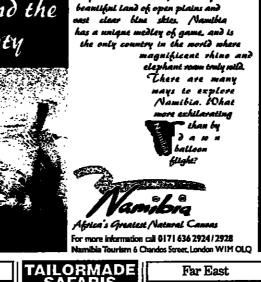
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INDEPENDENT

When the wrath of the country people will be set ablaze

On the evening of Thursday, 26 February, Britain will be on fire from end to end as chains of beacons are lit to herald the second great countryside march on London, on I March.

Beacons have been part of our history since time immemorial. They have been used to give warning of invasion, as when the Spanish Armada was approaching in 1588, and in celebration of great events - for instance the Queen's Silver Jubilee. in 1977. But never, so far as I know, have they blazed up as an expression of nationwide anger. That is what the fires of February

1998 will signify: the wrath of country people at the way the Government seems bell-bent on steamrollering their wishes and obliterating many facets of traditional rural life. Initial opposition was sparked off by the threat to foxhunting: the countryside marches which led up to last July's rally in Hyde Park were organised largely by the hunting

Now the protest movement has spread to include not only the Country Landowners' Association (CLA) but also the powerful National Farmers' Union (NFU), which has 80,000 members working on the land.

Once again, a lead has been given by Charles Mann, the Gloucestershire farmer who organised last summer's long-distance treks. This time, however, detailed organisation will devolve not on to the hunts, but on to local branches of the CLA and NFU.

The one major landowner notable by its absence from fire-lighting will be the National Trust, which has announced that it "does not permit political activities to take place on its properties, and is therefore unable to agree to the request to light beacons on its land".

In claiming that "in the past these beacons have only been lit for national celebrations", the Trust is well wide of the mark. For centuries the beacons were a key element in the defence of the



Flaring up: the beacon at Calton Hill, Edinburgh, is lit during the VE celebrations in 1995. 'Yet on 26 February, far from marking any national achievement, beacons throughout the country will blaze as an expression of rural anger

when the chances of invasion were events of 1977, which were worked out summer, is planning a fire on the top of highest, they were manned continuously. in meticulous detail by the Royal Instiand the early-warning system was so efficient that, according to an intelligence report of 1545, the English could triangulation network of the Ordnance 3,493-ft summit. muster between 25,000 and 30,000 men Survey, and after a prototype bonfire had at any one point within two hours of the alarm being raised.

The Trust's decision knocks out con was circulated. The heap of brush-**DUFF** ing 30 tons of material. HART-DAVIS

several prominent sites from the 1998 protest, not least the 1,705-ft Dunkery Beacon, on the north coast of Somerset, and plays havoc with the main lines of visual communication. Yet Mr Mann is undismayed; besides the major chains of "intervisible" beacons, he is planning any number of smaller fires on points festive atmosphere will prevail. Pyrothat will be in the view of people travelling by road, rail or air.

In the art of placing and making bearealm: throughout spring and summer, cons, much can be learn: from the

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tute of Chartered Surveyors. The selection of 96 main sites was based on the been successfully lit at Windsor on 22 March, a specification for a standard beawood and timber, this suggested, should be in the form of a cone 30ft wide at the base and 30ft high - a structure need-

Queen had lit the first fire in Windsor Great Park, the spark would leap-frog away to every corner of the realm. In the event the plan was partially frustrated by bad weather: cloud, rain and snow rendered some of the highest beacons invisible. Nevertheless, many thousands of revellers enjoyed a rare old evening out, with barbecues, dances and singsongs round the fires.

Mr Mann hopes that although the message of 1998 is serious, a similarly mania - always latent in rural folk - is afready threatening to burst out. In

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Snowdon, part of which he owns, provided he can persuade the tourist railway to hoist combustible materials to the

In low-lying Norfolk, by contrast, lan MacNicol, President of the CLA, will build a beacon on The Mount, an artificial mound raised on top of a low hill at the time of the Armada to warn the citizens of Norwich in the event of the Spaniards appearing off the coast.

Nationwide co-ordination will be The idea was that on 6 June, after the achieved (it is hoped) by split-second timing. The most remote blazes, in the Scottish Highlands, will be touched off at 6.10pm, those in Perth, Argyll and Stirling at 6.12pm, and so on down the country, until the final beacons ignite on the banks of the Thames in London at 6,30pm.

In 1588, according to Macaulay's ringing lines, "Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern shire/ Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling points of fire."

Five hundred years on, the fire will be travelling inwards - and surely the message will come home to even the North Wales Richard Williams, a farmer most urban Members of Parliament that who walked all the way to Hyde Park last the country is smouldering with rage.

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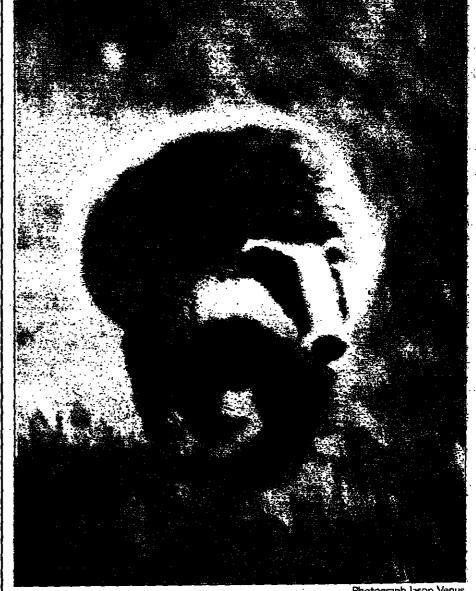
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NATURE NOTE

Badgers do not really hibernate, in the sense eggs do not start to develop in the womb unof going to sleep for the whole winter. But they el, thus reducing their need for food and enup in the hay, leaves and other bedding with hadgers share with roe deer and weasels, is that of delayed implantation. Sows may mate with between the two species. boars at any time of year, but their fertilised

til late in December, so that litters always arrive do have a biological mechanism that allows in early spring. Cubs are being born now, blind their body temperature to sink to a low lev- and almost naked. Their eyes will open after five weeks or so, but they will not emerge from abling them to remain underground for long their setts until the end of March or early April. periods at this time of year, comfortably rolled The saddest fact about badgers, of course, is that they carry bovine tuberculosis, and spread which they lined their sleeping chambers in the disease among cattle; yet, even after autumn. Another physical peculiarity, which years of research, scientists still do not understand exactly how infection is transmitted

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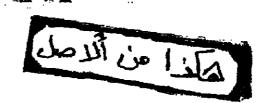
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The white of spring

There is nothing more cheering, when a searing north-easterly is cutting you in half, than seeing snowdrops, writes Anna Pavord.

In our garden, aconites regularly wondered? Even with his medical beat snowdrops for the title of first training. Dr Mackenzie couldn't flower of the year. But aconites have explain. He was hooked on them never acquired the same charisma. even as a child in Yorkshire, he said. The Garboesque "I want to be In a corner of his garden, he pointalone" quality brings acolytes flocking in droves around snowdrops during January and February. Invitations to select snowdrop parties are "to die for" as my American friend says, but you're not likely to be asked unless you can recognise 'John Gray' at 30 paces.

In fact, 'John Gray' would be kids' stuff to the real experts. They could pick it out even at 60 paces. It is so handsome, the pedicel (the little, thread-like stem the flower hangs from) is so long and fine, the size and substance of the petals so outstanding, that they would get it at And alliums. And daphnes. And once. I have to admit that, even at iris. And peonies. But one of the one pace, I didn't know it from 'Benhall Beauty' or 'Mighty Atom', both of which, like 'John Gray', are disare most needed - there's nothing tributed from John Gray's Benhall garden.

I'm used now to the pitying looks that come my way from true snowdrop fanatics. It usually follows the question "But surely, you must grow 'Sibbertoft'? and my confession that I don't. I've not been brave enough to reveal that the name, let alone the snowdrop itself, is un-

known to me. But I love being in the company of such experts. I love the comfort- rather than green markings on ing roll call of names, the gentle nudgings and disputes over correct pedigree. These are the kind of con- zie judiciously, though like a fond versations that swirled round my parent, he loves all his snowdrops head as a child, when packs of aunts and uncles would endlessly unravel and knit up again the antecedents of our Welsh neighbours. "No. You must mean the Powyses of Ty Hir, not the Powyses of The Neuadd. Now Raiph Powys's great grandmother ..." And then they'd be off, and nobody would remember to send me to bed.

So I had a happy time with Dr demented spider's web. Ronald Mackenzie, whose Oxfordkinds of snowdrops. To his natients (he is a GP in a country practice) he (more for the really rare ones) you the garden. Tickets cost £18 (in-open over the next three weekends Snowdrop shows may seem a perfectly same man, but want to know you have done all you cluding lunch) and are available (11am-4pm) Admission £2.50 Dr Mackenzie will join Rupert Gol- with readily available snowdrops as he himself confesses, "Snow- can to encourage them. An alkaline from Lavinia Nourse, Dullingham (01223 811200).

for being a bit strange." Well, there are certainly better times of the year to be on your hands and knees in the garden, but this is the only practical way to note the subtle differences in markings that distinguish one named snowdrop cultivar from another.

How did this madness start, I ed out the clump of Galanthus elwesii that he had bought in Woolworths when he was a boy. "Doctors are often keen gardeners. I think it must have something to do with the scientific background. You're used to diagnosing."

His garden is made on a gentle, south-facing slope that stretches up behind his cottage. It is immaculately maintained, mulched all over with mushroom compost, each little outpost of snowdrops set off against an equally riveting clump of hellebores. He likes those, too. reasons he likes snowdrops so much is that they come when they quite so cheering as seeing flowers such as 'Anglesey Abbey' bravely hanging on to their hats in the teeth

Unlike the majority of snowdrops, which have leaves of a bluish-grey, 'Anglesey Abbey' flowers among clumps of bright green foliage, which has the effect of making the flowers seem even more than usually pure. G. lutescens is another strange one, with yellowish the white petals. "Not quite so good as 'Flavescens'," said Dr Mackenwith a passion. "You know 'Flavescens'? It came to me from Juliet Berkeley at Spetchley. Now her great-aunt was a sister of the famous Edwardian gardener, Ellen .Willmott ..." And we were off again. All the great snowdrop gardens are related, it seems. A map of who had given what to whom would criss-cross Britain like a

So what do they need to make shire garden contains 70 different them happy, these special snow- Abbey, will lead a tour of the exdrops? If you are paying £5-6 a bulb drop people have got a reputation soil is better than an acid one, says House, Dullingham. Newmarket



Drop-dead gorgeous: Dr Ronald Mackenzie shows off a 'John Gray' snowdrop in his Oxfordshire garden

better than one that is baked dry.

Give them a deep, rich soil in sun

or partial shade, but don't plant them

in deep shade. When they have

clumped up, divide them every

three years in February or March.

Mulch them in November with leaf

mould or mushroom compost. And

get some long johns, so that when

they flower, you can enjoy them in

Dr Mackenzie will be one of the ex-

perts talking at the Snowdrop Study

Day, to be held on 26 February

(11am-3.30pm) at Anglesey Abbey.

Lode, Cambridgeshire. His special

subject will be propagating snow-

drops by bulb scaling. Aaron Davies,

who is working on a monograph of

snowdrops, will explain the differ-

ences between snowdrop species and

e collection of snowdrops in

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Snowdrop courses

Dr Mackenzie, and a cool root run CB8 9UP (01638 508186). Cheques Lines (which starred in the recent Society's show on 17 February should be made out to Cambridge Garden Courses and sent with a stamped, addressed envelope to

> Snowdrop gardens to visit Hodsock Priory's snowdrop spectacular opens today and runs until 8 March daily (10am-4pm) Admission £2.50. Clearly marked trail through snowdrops, aconites and blue Anemone blanda. Hodsock Priory is at Blyth, near Worksop, Nottinghamshire S81 0TY (01909 591204).

the above address.

The garden at Hatfield House, Hatfield, Hertfordshire is open tomorrow (11am-5pm) for a special snowdrop Sunday. Track them down on the bank behind the pond in the East Garden Admission £3.10 peted with snowdrops, and there are (01707 262823).

Richard Ayres, head gardener at the snowdrop are to be found at An- February (2pm-5pm) Admission glesey Abbey, the National Trust's £1.80 (01249 730459).

BBC version of Tom Jones) has a special snowdrop opening on Sunday 22 February (11am-3pm) Admission £5 per car (01476 566116).

Snowdrops are scattered through the period gardens of Chirk Castle, Chirk, Clwyd, originally a medieval Marcher fortress. Special openings over the next three weekends (12pm-4pm) Admission £1 (01691 777701).

At Cliveden, Taplow, Maidenhead, Bucks, the head gardener, Philip Cotton, will lead a guided walk, "The Garden in Winter", on 15 February, starting at 11am (01494

The woodland garden surrounding Lacock Abbey, Lacock, near Chippenham, Wiltshire is caropenings next weekend (14-15 Feb-More than 50 different kinds of ruary, 2pm-5pm) and also on 21-22

by in exhibiting some of his snow-such as 'Sam Arnott', 'Atkinsii' and Belton House at Grantham, drops at the Royal Horticultural 'Magnet'.

HARDY FUCHSIAS

A collection of 10 individually named

(11am-7pm, admission £5) and 18

Photograph: John Lawrence

February (10am-5pm, admission £3). The show will take place at the RHS Hall, Greycoat Street, Westminster, London SW1.

Snowdrop sales All snowdrops are best planted "in the green" at the end of March, rather than as dried bulbs in October. Named varieties are available from Avon Bulbs, Burnt House Farm, Mid-Lambrook, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5HE (01460 242177; four second-class stamps for catalogue), Louise Vockins at Foxgrove Plants, Foxgrove, Enborne, near Newbury, Berkshire RG14 6RE (01635 40554; send £1 for catalogue); John Moriey, North Green Only, Stoven, Beccles, Suffolk NEAR34 8DG (six first-class stamps for catalogue), or the Snowdrop Company, Barn Cottage. Shilton, Oxfordshire (four secondclass stamps for catalogue). If you are a beginner in this game, start

CUTTINGS

There's about a month left for thinking about the garden before we'll be back out there, pedalling fast to keep up with the action. But winter is the best time to wander round working out what we need to do to make things work better. Sometimes it's just a matter of adjusting the planting. recognising the fact that there is too much fighting over the same patch for anything to show to advantage. That can be easily put right. More difficult to resolve are the areas where the very shape of the bed, or the angle that a path takes, is uncomfortable. If you need help, turn to Penelope Hobhouse's Garden Designs (Frances Lincoln, £25).

Here are designs and planting plans for 23 different sites, not pie-in-the-sky ideas but real plans for real gardens which Mrs Hobhouse has designed over the last couple of years. The prevailing style is formal - particularly well suited to small, town gardens. Her plan for a typical London plot, an Islington patch three times as long as it is wide, is a classic example of how to make the best of awkward proportions. Her planting includes plenty of lush foliage: clipped bay, camellias, viburnum, euphorbia, ferns, hostas, catmint.

The range of situations covered in the book includes a windswept island off the west coast of Scotland, gardens safe for small children (fill the water tank with large pebbles) and gardens designed to be plundered for flowers for the house. The planting schemes are lush and varied, and the book is at the same time practical and dreamy, a rare combination.

On Thursday 19 February, Sybille Kreutzberger and Pamela Schwerdt, "the girls", as they were generally known when they gardened at Sissinghurst for the redoubtable Vita Sackville-West, will be telling the story of the new garden that they have made since retiring to the Cotswolds (I've seen it, and it is brilliant). This is the third talk in the Winter Lecture Series arranged by the Oxford Botanic Garden. which take place in the Garden Quadrangle Auditorium, St John's College, Oxford and start at 8pm. Tickets (£6) from Louise Allen at the Botanic Garden, Rose Lane, Oxford OX1 4AX (01865 276920).

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Members of the Conservatory Association

School for the starry-eyed

It is a dark and stormy night in West London. A crescent moon bobs between the clouds and a diverse group of men and women gathers to discuss the alignment of the planets. Sally Staples joins them.

Astrology is a subject that bothers people. Even if they scoff at the whole idea, they may furtively scan their newspaper horoscope, haunted by a hunch that just maybe there is something in it after all.

Tonight a lawyer-turned-counsellor, a record producer, a New Zealand child-minder and a Rowan Atkinson lookalike are among the dozen men and women sitting round a table listening earnestly to tutor Kim Farley. She fits the bill as an astrologer - a tall, elegant woman with a cascade of curly hair, star-shaped earnings and an outfit in shades of burnt orange. Surely she must be a fire sign.

Kim is all warmth as her protégés step in from the cold, wet street. "Welcome back, my levelies. Missed you all." It promises to be a somewhat stagey evening, but within minutes Kim has everyone's attention and is setting her students little tasks to help them to recap what they learnt in their last

As the evening progresses, she switches from a cosy and almost patronising approach to one of extraordinary fluency, rapidly dealing with a mass of seemingly complex theories and mathematical phenomena. She is indeed inspirational; it is not hard to see how some of the class's sceptics have been won over to the wonders of astrology.

Kim herself is not interested in persuading people to believe, but rather in expounding the theories and explaining interpretations.

"I started on a course just like this in 1989," she says. "I saw what it offered, and spent six years getting my diploma. Now I am a member of the Faculty of Astrological Studies. For me astrology is about what things mean - not predicting what is Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus. Neptune and going to happen.

"I enjoy getting people to think about it. Yes, I do sometimes skim through

newspaper horoscopes, but when you reduce a complex issue to a few lines it makes it all very banal. The skill of newspaper astrologers is in the writing, more than anything else; unfortunately, real astrologers don't make that sort of money."

The 20-week course, run by Kensington and Chelsea College for Adult Education, is open to complete beginners or those who have already dabbled in aspects of the planets and elements. The introduction deals with the astrological alphabet relating to planets, elements and what are called modes: cardinality, fixity and mutability.

Kim starts this evening's two-hour session by inviting everyone to imagine a circus, and then to relate different circus acts



to each sign of the zodiac - based on knowledge gleaned about the signs from earlier

This is good fun, if a little basic, The untutored would guess that a fire-eater might correspond to the fire sign of Aries, or that Siamese twins could be represented by Gemini, but the more expert come up with intriguing options. The sign of Taurus was associated with elephants and other animal acts but also with meticulous financial business, and would therefore be most likely to represent the cashier or tickof the circus. High-wire acts were associated with Libra, psychic mind-reading and snake-charming with Scorpio, sad clowns with Capricorn, and dog acts with Virgo. And so it went on.

The next exercise dealt with the 10 basic "planets": Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Pluto. This time Kim asked the class to imagine a brick wall and how the spirit of Astrological Studies in Orpington, Kent each planet might react to it. Well, that got (07000 790143).

them going. A random vox pop suggested that Venus would have a smooth under it, Mars might have a quick one up against it, and Pluto would be more into putting blacktinted mirrors on it.

Not that every reference was about sex. Saturn would build a scaffold around the wall. Neptune might dance to music beside it, and Mercury might play games against it.

When Kim switched the easy exercises to describing the 12 houses in astrology, the novice - such as me - was lost, but I could see how enraptured the rest of the class remained. They had all done their own chart and had studied the charts of some celebrities, including Judy Garland and Germaine Greer, to get a feeling of how to interpret a wide range of information offered by the circumstances, place and time of the subject's birth.

Dare Mason, a record producer, said that he had been sceptical, but was moved to give the course a go because he had met several astrologers and had. been impressed with what they said. "I was just amazed at how accurate my chart was. What I am learning now is the complexity of interpretation."

Lindsay, an erstwhile lawyer from London who had changed her profession to counselling, said she used her knowledge of astrology to help assess her clients.

"I have consulted an astrologer more than once, and each time I was very impressed. This is the first course I've been on, and I've found it fascinating."

Kim Farley's 20-week course at the Kensington and Chelsea College costs between £76 and £92 (0171-573 5333). She also offers private consultations in London (0171-403 6215). Information on courses in other parts of the country can be obtained from the Faculty of



GAMES

Winter is a stressful time. The cold weather may throw families to find a matching pair. If they don't the cards are replaced together on their own resources for a protracted period of unstructured time. What can be done to bind the disparate group together? What means can be found to pass the time less painfully? In the old days we played party games. No are so out of touch with our creativity and have so little leisure time that games and pastimes have to be expensively packaged for us. Choosing the wrong sort of game can be more distressing than de-stressing. The trick is to match the game to the company. Is the game for adults only, or could children be included? Is it a strategy game for two, or a rip-roaring team game? Is it a game of skill or of chance? Could it lead to board

Games of knowledge and skill, for example, are often riskier with relative strangers than games of chance, especially if one of the players is too competitive. There always seems to be an Uncle Eno figure, who, mistaking Trivial Pursuit for a game of knowledge, has memorised all the answers. The compendiousness of his knowledge in this very narrow range makes him feel good, but it ruins the game for the rest of us.

Because of the element of randomness involved, the Uncle Eac strategy is doomed with My First Animal Memory Game (2-8 players, 3+ years, Ravensburger, RRP £6.99) in which you shuffle paired cards and place them face down on the table. Players take it in turns to turn over pairs in an attempt

WHAT TO PLAY ON COLD WINTER EVENINGS CHRIS MASLANKA

face down. The aim is to build up a picture and remember what is where. The photos (as you'd expect) are much more realistic than the usual artist's impressions, which helps when o to familiarise you with animals. Harry : Sarah (4) played it together quite contentedly while Lucy (21/4) enjoyed simply pairing up their eards on her own. Could this game help restore the concentration and attention span so undermined by children's television? (Rating: p, Z)

Stacrobats (Balancing skill for 1-4 players, 5+ years to adult, Ravensburger, RRP £6.99). Players are allotted a lot of plastic acrobats to pile on a pylon without its overbalancing. The formation gets increasingly rickety as the game proceeds. Sue (37) looks forward to playing it without the help of Sarah (3) who took too much delight in the structural collapse occasioned by her as yet unperfected balancing skills. I thought it might also be a good way to test hand-steadiness in surgeons or in drinkers (the tippler's topple-test). (Rating: f, v)

In Uno Slam (Card game, 2-6 players aged 7+, Spear's, RRP £15: batteries not included) players match cards by number and colour in a race against time. The hecticity can be varied by adjusting the electronic timer. The attraction for children is the excitement, but I look forward to using it to demonstrate how even a little alcohol slows reaction times.

The aim in Pocket Money (Board game for two to four players aged 6+. Jumbo Games, £14.99) is to save £15 towards buying a hike while buying an item from each of four shops. Once I got over the uncharitable thought that you could save n real money by not buying the game at all. I found it easy to follow. The children enjoyed it while exercising their money-handling skills. Such misery is caused to people by not having been taught proper money-skills that I welcome this game. Indeed I look forward to an adult version to help you acquire through non-threatening play the necessary skills to juggle PAYE. VAT and tax self-assessment. (Rating: f. v)

If the real world is too harsh for young innocents, there's always Enchanted Forest (two to six players, Ravensburger, age 6+, for two to six players. RRP £9.99), a quiet thoughtful game children can play alone or with adults. The artwork is solid and attractive and the instructions are easy to follow. You have to travel through the forest finding three treasures asked for. Girls may enjoy this more than boys - it's fairy-tale stuff: more for Walter than Dennis the Menace. (Rating: p. Z)

Game of Knowledge (University Games, Kids International, about £22.99) is billed as "the educational game for children and their parents" and has a lot to commend it. It enables parents to participate in their children's education as well as facilitating learning through play. Each card has a question for a 10-15-year-old and one for an over-16. This levelling makes

it fairer for children to play it with their parents. The questions deal with factual information from everyday life (questions on nature, media, our world, sports, science) rather than with trivia - and yet all of us who played it enjoyed it. (Rating: f, v)

X is for the UneXplained (two to six players aged 14+, Lagoon Games, RRP £9.99) is a board game based on paranormal trivia. But it's not just for X Files enthusiasts. I derived far more pleasure from scoffing at the "facts" and tall stories than any sci-fi addict could possibly get from believing in them. Unfortunately this sharawaggi sticks in the mind like a burr. How will I ever forget that Kenji Urada met his death in 1981 in a Japanese factory when a robot mistook his head for a component that needed tightening? (Rating: p. Z)

I enjoyed Brain Strain (two or more players in teams, Lagoon, RRP £19.99), but then I would, wouldn't I? Lateral puzzles may not be watertight as puzzles, but as they involve creative thinking, finagling and the misleading use of words they are good for breaking the ice at parties. How many animals of each species did Moses take on the Ark? Answer: None, it was Noah. Unfair!, you cry. But so is life. All the Funfair of the unfair! (Rating: f, v)

Ratings key: p = quiet, f = noisy, ff = very noisy. Game rage risk: Z = almost irritatingly inoffensive, v = tread carefully, vv = have a friendly Relate counsellor on hand. Chris Maslanka's survey will conclude next week.

PANDORA MELLY GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Lenny Beige, 48, show-business legend

As a multi-faceted Lothario, I don't have much leisure time, but I like to relax by playing a little mah-jong with my mother at her Bide-a-Wee-Wyle Home and Funeral Co-operative in Temple Fortune. That and Yhatxee, a dice game which I use to humour her more than anything else; these days she has no idea of what's going on. My favourite game is backgammon. I play with

Omar Sharif - when we haven't time for a rubber of bridge - when I'm on tour in the Middle East or he's over here. It's quick, it's easy and it's very stylish, particularly if you have a monogrammed When we go over to Bruce Forsyth's house on

Boxing Day, we play pooh-sticks with cigar butts in his swimming pool. My Monte Cristo No 2 beats his slim panatella every time, and Ernie Wise still insists on using a cocktail Sobranie, which sinks without trace.

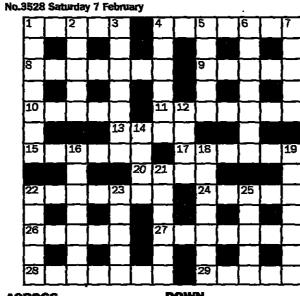
I've always got time for a game on my satin Twister duvet cover, and if I'm supine with a young lady, I'll suggest that we get the Mazola out. Obviously I don't use anything cheap like Crisp 'a'

There's very little that I haven't done, but if anything were possible, I wouldn't mind playing ping-pong with Sammy Davis Jr. He's been an inspiration to me. He's dead, unfortunately, so it won't happen. I like ping-pong because you don't have to move. Jews don't like to run about too much; they're not manual workers.

I used to play a game with my brothers. It was called "I'm the star, you're the agent and he's the publicist." I was only five at the time. Funnily enough my twin brother is still my agent. My older brother is sadly no longer with us. He used to be my

You are too late to see Lenny Beige's acclaimed performance at lust year's Edinburgh Festival, but may still catch him at the Regency Rooms at the Talk of London in Drury Lane. Information from the Box Office: 0171-483 2157.

CONCISE CROSSWORD



- Production quantity (5) Refrigerated cubinet (7) Measure of sound (7)
- Short poem (5) Musical group (5) Short-range photo (5-2) S African plant (4)
- Powerful (6) 17 Former Scottish county 20 Unclothed figure (4) 22 Excuse (7) 24 Bolivian city (2.3)

Give reasons for (7)

Joint (5)

28 OT book (7)

Go over main points (5) Heavy metal (4) Keen-sighted animal (4) Small cucumber (7) 18 Become ill again (7) 19 Medicated tablet (7) Speaks (6) Crash (5)

23 50-50 chances (5) 25 Keyboard instrument (5)

Not the done thing (3.4)

Unspoken (5)

Natural home (7)

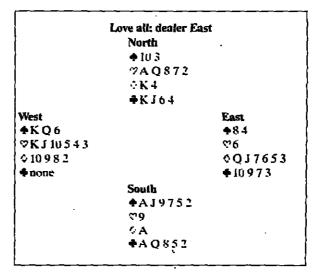
Type of cloth (6)

Snow house (5)

Theft (7)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword: ACROSS: 1 Eye, 3 Sacks (Ice-axe), 7 Chivalry, 8 Noon, 9 Lost property 10 Instep, 12 Ceylon, 14 User-friendly, 18 Lima, 19 Rehearse, 20 Spoil, 21 Key, DOWN: 1 Echelon, 2 Eaves, 3 Say-so, 4 Cannery, 5 Stout, 6 Slip-up, 11 Tornado, 12 Creche, 13 Odyssey, 15 Ships, 16 Rur-

BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON



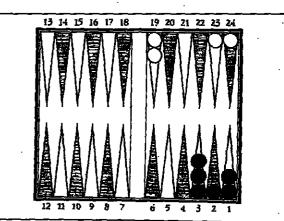
This proved an excellent hand for the technicians when it came up in the recent Macallan Pairs. As you can imagine, there was a wide variety of results: Four Spades played comfortably for an overtrick; the eventual winners (Heigemo and Heiness of Norway) were allowed to play the East-West cards in Three Diamonds doubled for a cheap escape; but the real interest came when South became declarer in Six Clubs after West had overcalled in

Now Six Clubs looks relatively easy if you can see only the North-South cards, but the irritating 4-0 trump break set problems which not all declarers managed to solve. For example, one distinguished declarer won the diamond lead and laid down the ace of clubs. Now he could not recover. he had to lose a spade and, to establish the suit, dummy had to ruff. Now East was bound to score a trump trick to defeat the contract.

Alfredo Versace (playing with Lorenzo Lauria, last year's Italian winners) was more alert to the possible dangers. He won the diamond lead and played a trump to the king to discover the bad break. He led a second trump through East, who followed with the nine, then continued

with the ace and another spade. Now a spade could be ruffed high with dummy's #J. establishing the suit, and the marked trump finesse taken against East's ten.

BACKGAMMON: CHRIS BRAY



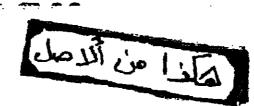
This was the first problem in our Christmas quiz. Should Black redouble, and if he does, should White take or drop?

How does one go about evaluating positions like this? Racing counts are no good and the Thorpe Count is unreliable for such a small number of men on the board. A combination of reference positions and deduction is the method to use. First we notice that Black will be off in three rolls or fewer unless he rolls a number containing a two followed immediately by another two. Double three or better will save him a roll and win the game unless White rolls double six. We know that a pure three-roll position (each side has six men and cannot miss during the bear-off) is a double and a narrow

pass. Is White better or worse than a pure three roll position? If Black does not roll one of his four best doubles then White has six great numbers: 66 - which wins immediately - 55, 44, 33, 65 and 56). These numbers leave Black requiring a double next time. This variation happens $32/36 \times 6/36 = 12.3$ per cent of the time. If White does not roll one of his best numbers then most of the time he will be left with three or four men against four of Black's men. In a pure two-roll position White will win 14 per cent of the time. Thus he will win this variation $32/36 \times 14 = 12.4$ per cent. So far we have White

winning 24.7 per cent, not quite the 25 per cent required to take. But he can do no better. We have given White the benefit in our assumptions so far and also ignored the fact that Black may roll a winning double on his second roll. Exact calculation shows that White will lose two points if he drops the redouble but 2.17 points if he takes. Thus the answer is (a) redouble (b) drop.

Christmas quiz results: The copy of Backgammon by Paul Magriel is on its way to Martin and Theresa Hughes from Jersey, Barry McAdam (Ealing) and Graham Titcombe (Kingston-upon-Thames) win Backgammon for Winners by Bill Robertie.



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Putting the horse before the car

Learning to ride isn't easy, at least for adults, it's a psychological game of control, mostly with yourself - but the horse has some input too, writes Eric Kendall.

The wind's in your hair, in the horse's It's a swift and unstoppable progresmane, and in his tail if you dare to look sion through the gears from zero to flat round. Man and beast are syncopated, rather than synchronised, in a sort of you'll go on your first time out.

Harlequin - a very large cart horse, asking it to. There is a difference. to the untutored eye - is a reassuring first ride, to whom the concept of galloping is as distant as it is to me. Designed for pulling ploughs rather than currying people, he cultivates the agricultural look by wearing his hair long at the ankles. He's ideal for a steady ride as long as speed isn't on the agenda. Despite his enormous height, his proportionate breadth makes sitting on him a bit like being on an elephant, in terms of the secure feel of his huge back. But it's a long way down, whether measured in hands, feet, or fractions of a furlong.

Half the battle when learning how to ride is keeping your nerve and maintaining a big pretence - not letting the horse know you might be scared. There's also the question of balance. You think you've got it, and then some smart Alec tells you to trot on a horse without a saddle and with your The British Horse Society (01203 arms in the air, at which point you discover that your head is heavier than your bottom, your feet and your boots combined. To make any progress, hours on horseback need to be clocked up in pursuit of the rider's Holy Grail: a good seat.

Well before that stage, certain movements become second nature being pulled briskly down the neck of the animal whenever it gets within range of ground-level greenery, and jiggling along at a trot before anyone's 832546). explained how to "rise". And you don't need an A-level in equine science ing holidays all over the world. Most cowboy gear. Likewise, the typical rup (they should have a heel).

to recognise the rearing head, bared teeth and laid-back ears of a cross horse that's been run into once too often by one of its stablemates - it can only mean trouble, especially if your "seat"

Other than rearing and bucking, the

You don't have to be interested in fox-hunting or polo to want to ride. For many, it's the sensation of speed and a power that's almost part of you, experienced in deep, quiet countryside a bucolic adrenaline kick. There's also the practical side, even in this age: horses as transport, particularly in areas where it's hard on foot and impossible in a vehicle. The logical, adventurous extension of this is to reach Britain's and the rest of the world's unspoilt corners on horseback before someone arrives with the Tarmac. Even areas that do have Jeep or car access can be infinitely better seen from the saddle - on a horseback safari you gallop with the herd of zebra, rather than watching them from a minibus through a telephoto lens.

Learning to ride

414118) approves and monitors riding schools throughout the country. Contact them for details of approved local schools. A good alternative to "normal" country riding is on the coast. Long beaches offer potential gallops on miles of hard-packed sand: Pakefield Riding School, Suffolk (01502 572257); Rose Acre Riding School, Norfolk ers with as little as four months' rid-(01263 720671); Trenance Riding ing experience. School, Cornwall (01637 872699); Clyn Du Riding Centre, Wales (01554

A number of companies offer rid-

still eludes you.

out, and is the most telling moment in lumpy trot which is about as fast as how fast a horse can go when it reala would-be rider's career. You discover ly wants to, rather than when you're

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cater to experienced riders; on safari, Riding the waves: coast riding "you must be able to gallop out of trouble". Other, more mountainous areas need less riding experience, as the altitude and terra: restricts any potential for equine high jinks, and the likelihood of coming across threatening wild animals is remote. Ride World Wide (0171 735 1144) includes opportunities for expert and novice without just mixing them together in a big group (sometimes a problem on large US dude ranches). Their trip to the Chilean Andes (where endurance is the key, with four to six hours a day in the saddle) has been enjoyed by rid-

One of the most appealing aspects of

riding abroad is dressing up in real

offers potential gallops on miles of hard-packed sand Photograph, Penny Kendall

13/OUTDOOR

British outfit must be responsible for more people not taking up riding than any other factor, though the latest generation of helmets should further reduce the risk of head injury in a fall or, more amusingly, during low-branch encounters,

The idea of jodhpurs is that the seams are in the right, non-chaffing, places. Their Figure-hugging aspect also ensures that folds of material con't ruck up I atween you and the horse. Jeans will rub the insides of your legs but will do initially; gloves are useful. Most vital is a pair of boots that won't easily allow your foot to slip through the stir-

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Downhillers have to leap off garage roof but no one's allowed to dangle from the wardrobe



ROWBOTTOM

ON OLYMPIAN EFFORTS TO MASTER LOCAL **CUSTOMS**

The service road outside Tokyo's Narita Airport was empty. Gesturing to us to wait on the pavement, the policeman took a whistle from his belt and blew it. He then gestured to us to cross the service road. It was an interesting introduction to Japan.

On the bus ride into Nagano, where we members of the Fourth Estate were to report on the XVIII Winter Olympics, our young guide did what he could to divert our attention from the tedium of the

We are going through the centre of Tokyo now so you will see lots of buildings. Thank

There were indeed many buildings to be seen on our slow progress along the freeway which cuts through the city at seventh floor level. Had they been trees, the slimmer of the away through lack of sunlight.

It had taken us almost two hours to reach Tokyo from the airport. As we crossed over a railway line, the bullet train to tion cleaving the air.

"The Shinkansen is going underneath us now. The Shinkansen is the fastest train in Japan." A little ironic groan went

through the bus as a few of us shifted on seats that were just a fraction too narrow for the human back. "We will be going for six

hours," our guide went on. "It may be more. So you can do whatever you want." The range of possibilities

peared limited. "Sleep or chat or whatever

you want. But please don't half obliterated by large cross-

dangerous." Located six hours later in

my little room with a view over the cement factory, I detected a similar tone in a sheet Nagano passed right under-rieath us, its beak-like front sec-rect usage of my furniture.

There was apparently a possibility that moulds and bacteria might grow behind the furniture if it were situated too close to the wall. A minimum distance of 10 centimetres was recommended. I made a mental note to check that statistic at an appropriate time.

"Do not stand or jump on the furniture," the instruction went on. "You could lose your balance, fall and he injured. These acts may also shorten the life of the furniture."

By way of illustration, two erring stick men were pictured.

ing position, a book flying out of his hand. The second, unaccountably, was hanging from the top of his opened wardrobe door with both hands. No clue was given as to what might have

desperation. I had not realised that a simple desk, chair and wardrobe could harbour such peril.

Was this unnerving awareness, a national trait, I wondered, or merely a local peculiarity? Whatever, it was an interesting introduction to my Olympic lodgings.

The concrete factory, in its way, said a lot about the coexistence of the Olympics and this sprawling, low-rise, industrialised town, trapped in its own net of telephone wires.

A blue Olympic symbol,

convenient vantage point which happens to be this factory's central tower.

But if that juxtaposition appears odd, there are other anomalies about these Games moved him to such an act of that are even harder to take in.

One of the stated aims of the Nagano Olympics is "to pay homage to nature." Accordingly, there has been much attention given to environmental

A small forest, natural habitat to several rare birds, has been painstakingly transplanted from the biathlon course.

The downhill skiing course at Hakuba has also been shaped by environmental pressures. Its length has been curtailed by the need to safeguard national park land at the top of the mountain. And its first big complete with the inevitable jump has been specially con-

densely packed tower blocks stretch your arms out of the around us would have withered windows because this is very wards off a chair from a stand-been attached to the highest well over a section where rare alpine flowers grow. Graham Bell, Britain's veteran downhiller, likened the experience to

jumping off a garage roof. Yet this is a town where traffic pollution is so bad that many of the inhabitants walk the streets with face masks on. Outside the main Olympic village, another logo depicting five rings is on display in front of a factory issuing yellow smoke into the air from two stacks.

Among those trying to take in the more opaque Japanese customs this week was the minister for sport, Tony Banks. He was, he said, looking forward to seeing the downhill skiing, although he was happy to acknowledge that his native landscape in West Ham had not prepared him for anything like the Hakuba. Not unless one counted the dry skiing facilities

at Beckton - "the Beckton Alps" - as he had it.

Later in the week, the minister plans to try to fathom the mysteries of curling. That should provide him with an-

other mountain to climb. Wandering through Nagano town centre on the way to the function at which the Minister appeared, I had become aware of an elderly Japanese gentleman in a baseball cap closing in on me with intense benevolence. "Where you from?" he

asked, smiling alarmingly. "From England."

"England?"

"Diana," he said.

"Diana?" "Diana, Yes. Diana. She

He was still grinning. I smiled, and quickened my step. It was an interesting introduction to Japanese conversation.

Samaranch

in S Africa

for the first time.

backs Games

South Africa were yesterday

given the strongest hint that they will be the county to bring the Olympics to Africa

The endorsement of the Rainbow Nation came from the highest source. Juan Antonio Samaranch, the president of the International Olympic

Committee, said that he hoped

the Olympic Games will go to

bidding cities for the 2004

Games, which were awarded to

Athens last September. The

venue for the 2008 Games will

Samaranch said in Nagano.

"We hope in 2008 there will

come other candidates from

Africa. We hope very much we can hold the Games one day on

Other South African cities,

including Pretoria and Johan-

"One continent is missing,"

Cape Town was among the

South Africa in 2008.

be selected in 2001.

this continent."

Monster of the slopes aims to join the giants

A former bricklayer who was dumped from ski school is poised to put Austria back on the summit of Olympic alpine racing.

Mike Rowbottom reports from Nagano, Japan, on the fall and rise of the gravity-defying Hermann Maier.

There has been much earnest discussion this week about the quality of the snow here. Unlike the powdery snow on which the

reason being that these mountains in the heartland of Japan form a natural battleground for the warm air coming in from the Pacific, and the cold Siberian air from the opposite direction.

Result: snow which makes ski

Katja Seizinger summarised the fears of competitors when she described the courses as "a lottery".

So when the most startling new talent in the sport, Hermann Maier, arrived for the winter Games, there was one very obvious question to ask. ∸Hermann, what do you

make of the snow in Nagano? "Well," the Austrian replied. "It's just as white as it is in Flachau." And the mighty shoulders which have powered him into a virtually unassailable position in the World Cup standings shook with laughter.

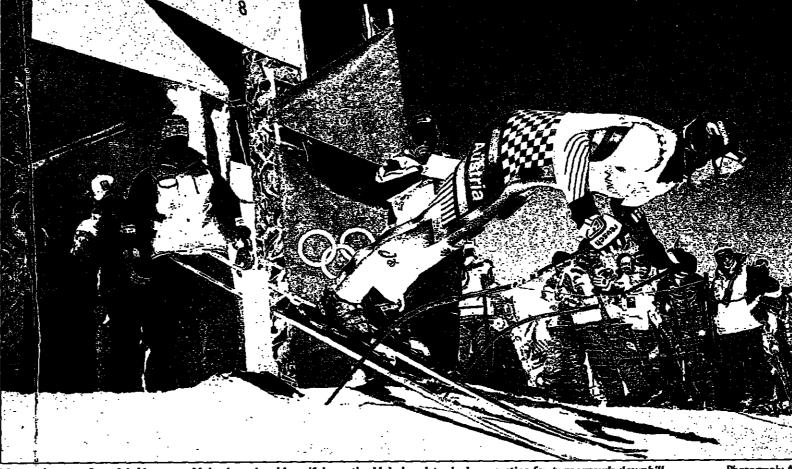
The nicknames which this bear of a man has been given -"Monster", "The Herminator". - are pointers to the awe in which he has come to be regarded in the world of skiing.

This season he is poised to become the first Austrian to win the overall World Cup title since Karl Schranz in 1969, having won 11 events so far in downhill, giant slalom, super-giant slalom races and combined.

> that across range of disciplines, puts him in the company of the greats. Graham Bell, Britain's fivetimes Olympic skier, likens what Maier is doing this season to the per-

Jean-Claude racing unpredictable. Germany's Killy, Ingemar Stenmark and Alberto Tomba. "But they were doing it in their prime," he said. "And Maier is doing it from nowhere."

The circumstances of the Austrian's fall and rise are the stuff of comic books - a ski version of Alf Tupper, "Tough of the Track, in The Hotspur. After being dropped from the Austrian national ski pro-



Mountain man: Austria's Hermann Maier launches himself down the Hakuba piste during practice for tomorrow's downhill

Photograph: AP

of a knice injury, he became a loose snow. bricklayer, while working as a part-time ski instructor on the slopes of his native Flachau.

Year's of slapping mortar and carrying bricks transformed formances of the undersized teenager. He is ponents he appears almost six feet wide. "It turned out to be good training," he said.

The apportunity to return to the top flight came in 1996 when the World Cup tour arrived in his hornetown. As a man who was we'll acquainted with the organisers to become a forerunner, a volunteer job which

gramme at the age of 15 because the competitors to remove

Maier was well aware that all the leading Austrian officials would be watching; so he took an audacious risk. Like an athletics pacemaker with ideas at Garmisch early in 1997 and his above his station, Maier shiftunder six foot tall, but to his op- ed himself down the mountain with the abandon which has characterised all his racing. The

result is now the stuff of legend. "It was a lot of pressure, that's for sure." Maier said at the time. "I knew it was the last chance for me to make something happen in my career. But slopes, he was asked by the race when I left the starting gate, I wasn't thinking of the pressure. I just wanted to ski well, entails skiing the course before and to have fun. I went for it."

The inspirations for Alex

Heath's journey to the

giant sialom in Nagano

Walt Disney film Cool Runnings.

is to don the green and gold jer-

sey of the Springbok, or perhaps

play some cricket, football even.

Heath excelled at all the

above at school, but he chose parents replied.

ed the day 12th fastest and was soon being sent to compete on the 1996 European Cup circuit,

first victory in a World Cup event first full World Cup season has been stunningly productive. He has been the leading figure in a huge Austrian revival this season - in the world rankings, they provide seven of the top 10 male skiers. But unlike his col-

which he won. He registered his

leagues, Maier's success does not have its roots in the hyper-efficient Austrian training regime. "Maier is the new phenomenon in skiing," said the American Tommy Moe, who defends

And it went for him - he end- morrow morning. "He's raising the whole level of interest in skiing. He is a real monster. You can understand whey they call him Hermann Munster. He's got so much more hunger, because he's so new to it all.

"He cheats gravity. His strength and balance make him so fast that for me he is the favourite here in three events. "But he is beatable. Re-

member. Américans always rise to the Olympic Games and Austrians don't."

Moe's victory at the Lillehammer Games provided a similar shock for the European racers as his compatriot Bill Johnson's gold medal in the his Olympic downhill title to- downhill at the 1984 Games.

From plastic to fantastic: the first and only Springbok skier

But it would be a major upset if the Austrians failed to reflect their dominance on the slopes of Hakuba this week.

Maier, who finished in the top 10 during both days of downhill practice, has played down his chances, forecasting that the course - technically challenging, but not as steep as he likes - is more suited to his team-mate Andreas Schifferer.

"Usually in practice you will see Maier concentrating on different sections of the course during each run," Bell said. "He will blast one bit, then ease down on the next. But on the day, he will put it all together." Hakuba, and the world,

nesburg, are considered potential bidders.

"I'm not speaking only of Cape Town," Samaranch said. "It's up to their national Olympic committee to decide if other South African cities can bid for the games."

Osaka and Buenos Aires are the only declared candidates so far for 2008, although Paris

is considering a bid. Samaranch's comments came in response to a question from a Chinese television reporter, who asked whether the Games would go to another

continent after Europe in 2004. Peking was a narrow loser to Sydney in the race for the 2000 Games and China - notwithstanding the damage caused by recent doping scandals at swimming's World Championships is considering a 2008 bid which could centre on Canton or

With South Africa shrugging

Weekend timetable (Times in GMT) Today Snowboarding: Men's giant ceremony highlights 16:25-17:15. stalom, first leg 00:30. Second leg (men's delember and encembers) Today

Opening ceremony: 02.00 Ice hockey: Men: Preliminary round: Italy v Kazakhstan 07:00; Austria v Slovakia 07:00; Germany v Japan 11:00; France v Belarus 11:00.

Alpine skiling: Men's downhill 01:15. Freestyle skiling: Men's and women's TV times moguls, elimination round 0030. This aftern

Speed skating: Men's 5,000m Figure skating: Pairs short pro-gramme 1100.

ice hockey: Men: Preiminary round: Austria v Kazakhstan 05.00; Slova-Ida v Italy 0900. Women: Sweden v Fintand 0300; Canada v Japan 0700; China v United States 1100. Cross-country skiling: Women's 15- Luge: Men's singles, first run 05:00. km Classic style 00:00.

This afternoon: BBC2: Opening 24 hours per day: Eurosport.

statom): 213.50-03.00.

Tonight: BBC1: Alpine skiling (men's downhall) and snowboarding (men's giant slatom first round) 0100 0245

Tomorrow: BBC2: Alpine skiing (men's downhill), snowboarding (men's giaint statom), figure skating (pairs short programme), luge (men's first and second runs). women's les hockey, women's cross-country sking 13.30-18.05.
BBC 1: Women's curling, men's atpine sking (combined, downhill), women's snowboarding (giant states). 28:50-0300

came from a pencil case and a dry slope in Kent. Andrew Martin meets the lone Springbok skier. As unlikely sporting achievements go, Alex Heath's ranks, at a glance, alongside the Jamaican bobsleigh team, celebrated in the

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a glance to snow conditions at r 200 resorts world-wide	SPAIN	Wide cover of show on all rure	80%	4	. 70	7)	Bright interval
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But whereas the Jamaicans were hopeless, plucky triers, there is nothing Mickey Mouse about Heath's Olympic challenge in the giant slalom in Nagano. Heath is South Africa's first Olympic skier. And what makes the 19-year-old more extraordinary still is that be learned to ski not on snow-capped peaks -South Africa has only one small ski resort - but on the dry ski slopes of Kent. Heath's journey from the land of the Bokke to Colorado where he now trains via England's garden county is intriguing. After all, surely what every young South African - even one with an English father - wants Alex Heath, on a dry slope in England where he learned how

Africa's first Olympic skier at Nagano

instead to pursue the unlikeliest of goals because of a simple gift. On the eve of his family's departure for England when he was eight. Heath was given a pencil case by a friend. It bore a picture of a downhill racer, an image so different and inspir-

ing that Heath was enthralled. "I didn't know what skiing was really, and I'd never seen snow," he said. "I said to my parents, when I get to England. I'll be able to do this'." "At least the Alps arc 6,000

miles closer," his bemused

But the determined youngster was not in such a hopeless situation, since he soon discovered a 30m artificial slope in Folkestone eight miles from his new home. "I just absolutely loved it; there was nothing else wanted to do," he recalls. "I didn't know what to expect but I took to it quite well and loved trying to go faster and faster."

Barely a few months after his first tentative descents, he was clutching his first medal as a victorious member of his primary school's B team.

Heath's determination to

a chin-up bar) he finished in 42nd place in a field of 110 in to ski, will become South Photograph: Robert Hallam succeed manifested itself, painfully, in regular, high-speed tumbles. But improvement was rapid and Heath progressed to longer slopes and stiffer competition. He even skied on snow

The determination eventually paid off and Heath was the All England junior champion for two years. Other senior titles followed and he joined a ski club in Wengen where he received tuition from Austrian coaches. Heath switched to snow full time at the Waterville Ski Academy in New Hampshire.

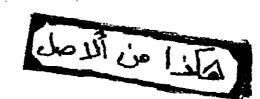
at the age of 12.

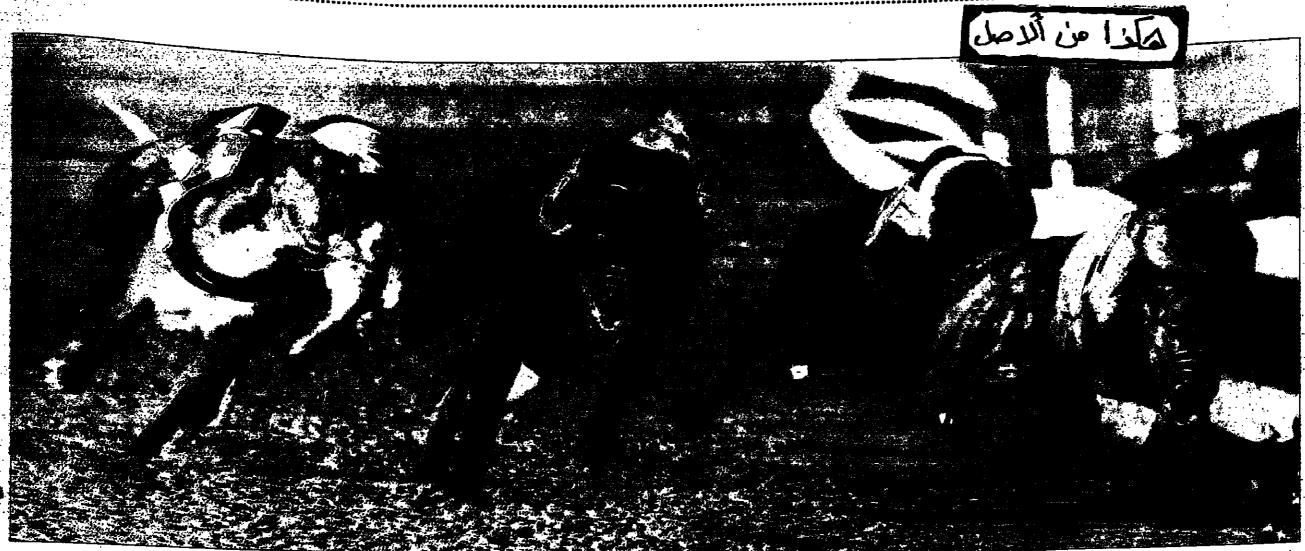
off its pariah status, Heath became the country's only worldranked skier in 1994. And having gained sufficient points through racing in the United States, he competed at the World Championships in Sierra Nevada, Spain, where he was the youngest competitor. There he improved 11 places on his start number of 79 in the super-G and he finished 30th in the slatom and giant sialom. From plastic to fantastic in barely six years, While recovering from a cracked skull (after falling from

last year's World Championships in Sestriere, Italy. Injury has limited his qualification for Nagano to the giant slalom alone, but he is far from daunted. "They say that the course is going to be hard. But I'm not going to change to way I am and in the future, hopefully,

I'll finish more than I fall. "I'm fortunate in that I'm 19. now and I've already been to two World Championships - I've got all that experience now, and I'll he going to an Olympic Games well before my competitive peak so I'm getting unbelievably valuable experience."

Unlikely as it sounds, South Africa's man of Kent may, one day, be its first man of gold.







Greyhound glitz as going to the dogs goes upmarket

Down at the dogs, business is booming. "Anyone who comes through the gates once will be a convert," is the motto of greyhound racing's administrators, and a promotional bliz throughout 1997 is thought to have persuaded 100,000 spectators to pay their first visit to

a track.

Attendances figures for the year are estimated to have risen by 15 per cent, a surge in popularity which even football's Premiership would struggle to match.

Our pictures capture a flavour of the action at Walthamstow, generally reckoned to be the Ascot of the greyhound racing world, and Hove, the home track of Ballyregan Bob, who is still – along with Mick The Miller – one of the few racing dogs most people have heard of. heard of.

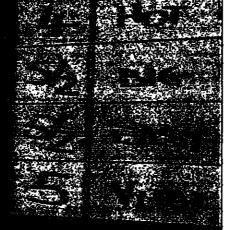
The sport may at last be shedding its downmarket image of shabby stadiums and substandard facilities, with investment and modernisation now the name of the game. In the trackside restaurants it is no longer a case of "whatever you like as long as it's in a basket" and there is always the chance that one lucky bet will cover the bill.

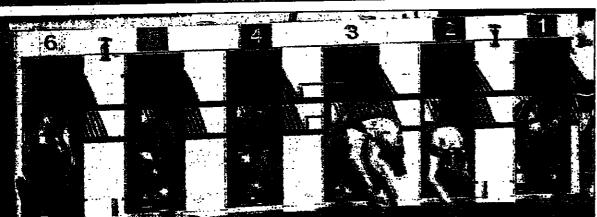
— Greg Wood

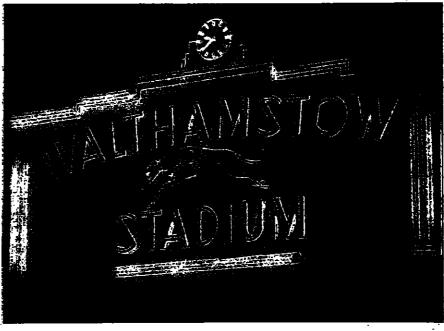
■ Copies of these photographs – and any others by
the independent and independent on Sunday photographers David Ashdown, Peter Jay and Robert Hallam – can be ordered by telephoning 0171 293 2534.



















16/RACING

SANDOWN HYPERION 1.25 Sir Talbot 3.35 Yeoman Warrior 4.10 BIG STRAND (nap) 1.55 Leotard 4.40 Colour Code 2.30 Debutante Days 3.05 Cylor Malta GOING: Good (Good to Firm in please in back straight). • Right-hand course with stiff lences and an upha finish. • Course is on A307, 4m S of Kingston. Esher station (service from London, Waterloo) adjoins course. ADMISSION: Cub £17, Junior (Sub (17 – 21 yrs) £14; Grandstand £12; Park enclosure £5 CAR PARK: Free parking available. • LEADING TRAINERS: D Nicholson 22 winners from 85 numers (259%), J Gifford 17-135 (126%), J Old 14-47 (293%), N Henderson 9-88 (105%). ■ LEADING JOCKEYS: R Durwoody 23 winners from 99 rides (23.5%), A P McCoy 14-73 (19.2%), M A Fitzgerald 10-102 (9.8%), C Maude 7-30 (23.3%). ■ FAVOURITES: 126 wns in 333 races (37.8%). BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Colour Code (440). 1.25 RIPLEY HURDLE (CLASS D) £5,000 added to stakes 4YO 2m 110yds BETTING: 5-4 Sir Tarbot, 7-2 City Heu, 13-2 Tough Art, 8-1 Premier Say, 12-1 Copper Shell, Part-tees, 16-1 Abejany, Lasding Nota, 33-1 offices 1997: Hayeam 4 10 to J Pastron 8-1 (K Bailey) 10 ran 1.55 ELMBRIDGE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £11,000 added 2m - 4 declared BETTING: 7-4 Storm Alert, 2-1 Lecturel, 11-4 Big idebt, 13-2 Oh So Ricky 1997: Certainly Strong 7 to 0 R Dunwoody 9-4 lav (D Nichokon), 4 ran 2.30 AGFA HURDLE (CLASS B) £15,000 added C4 - 6 dectared -BETTING: 7-4 Shadow Leader, 9-4 Naralio, 5-2 Semmertino, 10-1 Debutante Days, 16-1 I'm Supposin, 20-1 Master Beveled 1997: Dauble Symphony 9 10 4 J Cabarne 13-2 (C Brooks) 6 ren 1997: Double Symphony 9 10 4 J Catoms 13-2 (C Brooks) 6 ren PORIM GUIDE SHADOW LEADER, last season's top movice with an unbeaten run of four ~ including the Suprame Novices' Hurdle and the Scottish Champion Hurdle – fools set to regain the winning trait Charlie Egerton's charge had been of the track since April when going down only three parts of a length to Kertaul in Chinetimes Hurdle at Kempton but he still had sementing four lengths back in third. Egerton reckone my selection was beaten by a combination of things that day – he was too fresh, the bace was too slow and the ground loo soft – and is happy with the way the seven-year-old has gone since. The ground this UTTOXETER **HYPERION** 1.15 Mountain Path 3.25 Strong Tel 1.45 Riparlus (nb) 3.55 Wren Warbler 2.20 Kamikaze 4.30 Family Man 2.50 Calling Wild COING: Good to Soft (Good in places, a few soft patches). GOING: Good to Soft (Good in places, a few soft patiches). Left-hand course. Run-in of 170yd. Course is SE of town near B5017. Utitowster station adjoins course. ADMISSION: Cub 25 (CAPs £7); Centre of course 25. CAR PARIX Free. EADING TRAINESS: M Pipe 40 winners from 124 numers gives a success rate of 299%, K Belley 23-16 (198%), D Micholson 21-97 (216%), O Sherwood 19-51 (295%), G LEADING JOCKEYS: W Marston 12 winners from 124 ricks (87%), J Culloty 10-S3 (303%), R Johnson 10-97 (195%), D Gallegher 9-62 (455%). FAVOURITES: 222 wins from 669 races (37.7%). 1.15 DONCASTER SALES TROPHY NOVICE HAND-ICAP CHASE (CLASS C) \$20,000 3m 2f — 14 declared — Minerium weight: 10st True weights: Greeke Again 9st 13b, Act in Time 9st 6th, High Handed 8st 16th BETTUNG: 4-1 Strong Chairman, 5-1 Mountailer Path, 6-1 Careysvella, 8-1 Coole Hill, Pennymoor Prince, Committed Schedule, 10-1 Kandel Cavaller, Greekle Again, 12-1 others 1997: General Pungo 8 10 0 R Farrant 6-1 [T George] 13 nan FORM GUIDIE FORM GUENE Correpavilie has won two weakesh races in somiliaring style and was value for a lot more than his stylength win at Ludlow lest time. Up a stone strong he still has a leather weight and won't be to alway in this stronger company. Having won on desperate ground at Eveter, Pennymoor Prince needed every yard of the 2m 5t to get back up against Staunch Finand at Windoor. This is a more suitable test of stamma, but hele less fleely to complete his hardwit han Careysafte at the weights und the one possibly best treated is MOUNTARN PATH. Useful if ightly-raced, over hundes lest season. Mountain Path made a good start to its chasing cases with his second to previous where Burnt hip at Bengro before Christmas. Help handed glib better n') a one-paced fourth two lengths behind. With just that one outing behind him he went straight nito a handcap at Windoor and ancied Wehing Williams run in tair style Smart point-to-pointer Strong Chairmain has looked the business in his two starts under Pates and is built to carry his big weight. When Strong Chairman was beaten a langth by Hahmi at Chellenham in November, Kandal Cavatier was 18 langths back in third. Since then, Kental Cavatier has come right this is sown which tocad with a real test of stamma there on New Year's Look in the some rest Strong Chairman 18th better (plus Domen Salter). arta inere on New Year's Day, He also meets Strong Charmen 196 better (plus Carren Salier Selection: MOUNTAIN PATH 1.45 LADBROKE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) BBC1 £15,000 added 2m 6f 110yds £10,943 LINGFIELD HYPERION 1.40 Appyabo 2.10 Head Gardener 2.40 Frankie Ferrari 3.15 Fast Franc 3.45 Ursa Major 4.20 Dayrella GOING: Standard: STALLS: tm - outside; rest - inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low over \$1 & 5! Equitrach surface; teft-hand, sharp undulating course. Course is SE of town on B3228. Lingfield station adjoins course. ADMISSION: Y.O. CAR PARK: Cub E3; rest free. LEADING THANNERS: GI. Moone 77-684 (122%), M.Johnston 50-220 (173%), R. Harmon 48-322 (192%), Lond Harmingdon 39-213 (192%). LEADING JOCKEYS: A Clark 68-634 (124%), S. Whitworth 48-323 (142%), D. Holland 41-39 (205%), J. Quitna 33-611 (54%). BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Dower Soul (3-5), Emailion (visored, 2-10), Frankle Permail (visored, 2-40), Into Delrit (visored, 4-20).

time should be just right and will anable Stradow Leader to bring his finishing speed into play. Sanmartino, who is marginally better off with Shadow Leader, dinflad from evers to 7-4 at Kempton and was all at see on the ground. Devid Nicholaon's numer had beatan Kezawi with a ton in hand despite the neck warning margin at Kempton in October and, les Shadow Leader, will be a different proposition on this fast surface. Sanmartino, more than times lengths behind fin Supposin in the Champton Hurdle, has twice finished in front of Richard Howels runner this season and should again have his measure here. Manatio is urbesten in six stats over times, putting up her best display in the fiber Siver Troptry at Chapstow in November on her mappearance. She may lack the speed of the two principals at this trip. 3.05 SCILLY ISLES NOVICE CHASE (Grade 1) C4
(CLASS A) £33,000 added 2m 4f 110yds £20,752 CLASS A) E33,000 added 2m 4f 110yds £20,752

1 -255 CHEFS SONG (89) (7) Alto A Devine \$ Dow 8 11 8 N Williamson

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1 -255 CHEFS SONG (89) (7) Alto A Devine \$ Dow 8 11 8 N Williamson

1 -255 CHEFS SONG (89) (10 Alto A Devine \$ Devine Copy of the ESTITING: 5-4 Cytor Maite, 5-2 Jack Doyle, 6-1 Dr Launt, 6-1 Wayward King, 7-1 Catel's Song, 20-1 Ealogy
1997: Stately Home 6 11 6 N Willeman 5-1 IP Bowen) 6 ran
FORMI GUIDE
An arthquing context this with CYPOR MALTA being taken on by Jack Doyle, Dr Leunt and Chief's Song, Cyfor Meite must be my choice getting 10th from the others. Twice a winner at Autsuli in 1997, Mastin Pipole charge scored in good style over course and detance four weeks ego on his British debut, and is second best for the Arkle at the Chetterham Presideal, Jack Doyle, whose main larget is the Catelian at the Arkle at the Chetterham Plowever, However, he is much approved and has a 200 per cent record after a couple of races this term - at Ludiow and at Chetterham, when he was most impressive in elemaning Spring Gale eight lengths. Dr Leunt has won three of his four chases but has more on his plate this time. Chet's Song jumps well and has won three times times the term. He will not be far away. Eulogy was successful at Ascot in November and would probably have won Sail By The Stars' race at Kempton if he hash't toppled over two out. His jumping may again let him down.

Selection: CYFOR MALTA 3.35 AGFA DIAMOND LIMITED HANDICAP CHASE C4

BETING: evens Cool Dawn, 4-1 Destin D'Estronal, 13-2 Yearnen Wisnfor,7-1 Coust Melody, Grey Smoke, 10-1 Antaris Express
1997: Destra Dove 10 11 2 N Wilsonson 8-1 (S Earls) 6 ten
FORMI GUIDE
Cool Dawn was completing an Ascot hat-trick when beating yestenday's Lingfield scorer Crawell Lad a couple of lengths under 72st two weeks ago and, although part up 5-b, looks sure to go off at odds-on. However, DESTIN D'ESTRUVAL has a fine chance getting 21 b from the topwelght. Devid Nicholsons charge landed two of his lest three races in 1998-97 and went in at Worcester on his return. He cloth's show much in his next three races, falling or one of them, but shaped as though returning to form last time when a good third to Rever Mandale and Strath Royal when 2b wrong in the weights at Wetherby. He goes off a 5th lower mark fere. Court Melody ran well in his first three races this term before a fourth (of five finishers) to Kendal Cavalier at Chellentham (4m 1), He was previously a good third to Him Of Pralse over only half a furlong shorter at Haydock but seems likely to ber happiler returning to today's shorter the. Antiratic Express hearif shown anything in two outings this season. Yearners Wernior, who won a weak heat at Chellenham on his return, fell four out — when lying fifth of six - in Peta The Paracris race there on New Year's Day.

DELTINGS: 7-2 Big Strand, 5-1 Princeful, 12-2 Friendship, 8-1 Harbour Island, Mistingueli, Cusse 9-1 Whip Hand, 10-1 Moorish, 16-1 Brothhouse Soy, Danydon, 25-1 Russeay Pete, 33-1 others 1997: Tulymuny lof 6 to 12 E Caleghan 63, 7-2 Lift Alefanson) 15 ran FORM GUIDE 9-1 White Hand, 10-1 Moonists, 16-1 Blockmoses 30%, usersystem, 20-1 has a second 1997. Tulymury 1616 of 02 & Callegium (3) 7-2 Life Jarier 1997. Tulymury 1616 of 02 & Callegium (3) 7-2 Life Jarier 1997. Tulymury 1616 of 02 & Callegium (3) 7-2 Life Jarier 1997. The Hand of the Hand of 1997. The Hand of 1997 o 4.40 FEBRUARY NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) 25,000 C4 — 8 declared —

Minimum weight: 10st 5th True hencicop weights: Court Melody 8st 13th, Yeoman Wenter 8st 12th, 8ETTING; evens Cool Dawn, 4-1 Destin D'Estronal, 13-2 Yeoman Warrior,7-1 Court Melody, Gr T declared —
7 declared —
8-1 Capadia Electric, 20-1 Brush With Farns, 65-1 Reskhall
1997: El Fredde 7 til 7 L Harvey 9-2 (J Oid) 9 ten
FORM GUIDE
COLOUR CODE, who ran well without scoring on the Flat in 1997, was unbesten in two
bumpers and came home an impressive winner on his huroling bow at Market Rasen. He
made mistakes at the last two flights but is in bilinters today. Good Lord Marchiny score
by four lengths at Warwick after rearket leader Sursum Corda, who appeared to be going the a winner, fell two out. Kurakka was only fifth to Gatifax at Lingfield efter a highby promising debut second behind Zaralaska at Ascot. Selection: COLOUR CODE

4.10 TOTE BOOKMAKERS SANDOWN HANDICAP C4 HURDLE (Grade 3) (CLASS A) £40,000 2m 6l

2.50 STANLEY RACING NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £7,500 added 2m 5f - 10 deci — 10 cacamed — Minimum neight: 10st. True handlesp weight: Vesiker 9st 2b. BETTING: 2-1 Calling Wild, 9-2 Shound: Friend, 5-1 Captum Rossell Island, 10-1 Speedwell Prince, 12-1 others 1997: Noyan 7 10 12 R Thomton (5) 2-1 g tav (R Fahay) 6 ran

2.20 SINGER & FRIEDLANDER NATIONAL TRIAL BBC1 HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) 250,000 3m 4f Green, pink cross belts
8 13-86F JET RULES (21) (The Jat Sciencery Company) Mrs J Pierren S 109...J R Kewenigh B
Gold, black hoop, hooped cap

BETTING: 9-4 Him Of Praise, 6-1 Cali 11 A Day, Martell Boy, 7-1 Nahithen Lad, 15-2 Ottowa, 9-1 Mcgregor The Third, 16-1 Kamilaza, 16-1 Taming Iriz, 20-1 kiliot's Lady, 25-1 others 1987: Lord Gylene 9 11 9 R Johnson 11-8 fav (S Brocksham) 9 ran

1987: Lord Gylene 9 tt 9 R Johnson ti-8 fav (\$ Brookshae) 9 ran FORM GUIDE.

Natithen Lad is gradually returning to form and was staying-on again behind General Wolfe and Stratin Royal over 3M in the mud at Haydock a formight ago. Stapping up half a mile gives him a real chance of delying top weight. HIM OF PRAISE has gone up 179 shop the start of the season, which doesn't seem prohibitive considering he is unbacter in tour starts and is developing into a leading stayer. Each run has brought a better performance and he smiply would not be denied at Sandown four weeks ago, leading for the second time at the leat in the far side and refusing to be Call if it in Day go by on the run-in. The runnerup's 6b put for a length and a half may not be enough. Ottowar's inexperience in comparison to his ten rivels doesn't necessarily rule him out. He made a good comeback after insang last search when to good for Eulogy in the mud at Wordesser in November and has come up against smart novice Fidding The Facts in two subsequent outlings. He stays well and could see off some of the older horses at the weights.

Selection: HIM OF PRAISE

3.25 JENKINSONS NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,500 added 3m 110yds 1997: Supreme Lady 6 to 0.J Culloty 5-1 (Mass H Kinght) to me
Lucia Forte really came to harself towards the end of last season and ended up winning
a decent race over this trip at Wincanton and the Hoechst Panacus Final at Newbury. This
progressive mere reappeared at Huntingdon test month and already had matters well in
hand when the taxourite fell at the second last. She has been raised 9b but comes here
with every chance of continuing her run and is passed over only because DALLY 807
might provide some value. Daily Boy showed his best form in the earlier part of last season, making all over an extended three miles at Cattarick on his third start, and there is
severy reason to believe he is on the way back. He stepped up on his opening run this
term when keeping on well in third behind hit The Carrias over three miles at Newcastle
times weeks ago and his stamina will stand him in good stead here with Dictum Solly to
be forcing a strong pace from some way out. Dictum committed himself a bit too early
and was run out of it by Ginen Crusader at Windsor lest time. A winner here lest season,
that was a welcome return to form and Dictum should egain go well. A possible strong
pace month be against Ribparlue, as yet untited at this distance but shaping ricely against.
Stomyfairweather at Newbury first time out and numing better than his final placing behind Ripper Read at Ascot suggested. Royale Angels continues on the upgrade and is
chasing a four-timer after winning at Worcester and twice at Plumpton. He is, though, 21b
higher than when the run started. 3.55 EBF TATTERSALLS IRELAND NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) 25,000 added fillies & mares 2m 4l 1 30-F4 BLAST FREEZE (f) (BF) (Poner Heat-Inestment) N Honderson 9 Ti 0 JR Kavensagh 2 PO-2LF CAMILLAS LEGACY (SA) (Henry T Cole) H Cole 7 Ti 0 Ti J Marphy 3 POF6-LI CAMILLAS LEGACY (SA) (Henry T Cole) H Cole 7 Ti 0 Ti J Marphy 3 POF6-LI CAMILLAS LEGACY (SA) (Henry T Cole) H Cole 7 Ti 0 Ti J March 3 POF6-LI CAMILLAS LEGACY (SA) (Heaton Syndicate) C Pophern 8 Ti 0 McCard 4 41-41 CM-RECHTOWN CHARCE (19) (Marion Syndicate) C Pophern 8 Ti 0 McCard 7 OD-FRI MARCH (19) (An March 19) Harry 6 Ti 0 JA McCard 7 Hichards

-13 declared

-13 declared

BETTING: 9-4 Seymourswift, 3-1 Wren Warbes, 7-2 Best Freeze, 7-1 Pearl's Choice, 10-1 Camilles Legacy, 14-1 Slasinghurat Flyer, 16-1 Cartingford Gale, Sharley Cop, 20-1 others

1997: Harvest View 7 10 7 M Berry (7) 8-1 (C Brooks) 11 ran 4.30 GUINNESS NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £5,000 added

HYPERION'S 1.15: Strong Chairman has been competing in good company at Cheltenham and Newbury of late.

PUNTERS' GUIDE

He must have a big say here. Careysville and MOUNTAIN PATH have been picking up prizes at lesser tracks but are progre fast, especially the latter. 1.45: Lucia Forte has been raised

9th after an easy win at Hunting-don last month, but this mare is talented, as is Royale Angela, up 10th for a Plumpton victory last time. RIPARIUS was well beaten at Ascot three weeks ago, but the likelihood of better going today can snark a return to form.

2.20: Him Of Praise will become serious Grand National contender if taking this. This is his toughest test to date, though, and Ottowa and KAMIKAZE tempt at longer odds. Kim Bailey's grey was four lengths clear when falling at the final fence in a good novice event here 11 months ago.

SANDOWN 2.30: The second favourite for the Champion Hurdle, Shadow Leader, hardly set the world alight when second to Kerawi at Kempton on Boxing Day - Sammartino was four lengths behind and is 11b better off now. Marello's best performance came last time on easy ground over four furlongs further

TV TIPS cope with DEBUTANTE DAYS, a pav

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smart juvenile two seasons ago who has taken a long time to recover from a fall in the Triumph Hurdle. She won three times on the Flat last summer, runs well when fresh from a break, receives up to 15ib from her rivals and is reported to have been schooling well. 3.05: The French import CYFOR

lowance from his rivals, yet is more experienced over fences, having won twice at Auteuil. If the quick ground is a problem then Chief's Song may benefit. Π 3.35: Gold Cup hope Cool Dawn has been raised 5th for his most last

MALTA receives 10lb age al-

win and looks vulnerable. YEO-MAN WARRIOR looks as improved performer and can step up.

4.10: BIG STRAND acts on this ground, likes a stiff uphill finish and ran with promise on his return. Friendship, who has course anddistance form, is a big threat.

4.40- COLOUR CODE has stacks of potential, while Kurakka was and she may not have the speed to very disappointing last time.

The former National Hunt jockey Steve Smith Eccles (right) gives a runner-by-runner analysis of today's Tote Bookmakers Handicap Hurdle



Mistinguett: Stormed home in last Whip Hand: His trainer is not Daraydan: In excellent form be-reappearance. One to avoid. At this trip he has each-way claims. Princeful: Will struggle to improve on his second at Warwick last time. Far Dawn: Could not win if he Not the most fluent jumper.

held up. Could hit traffic problems. this on his first outing this season. Big Strand: An eye-catching third Conclusion: The game Mistinguett on his seasonal debut. The one they all have to beat.

Saturday's Cleeve Hurdle and sparkling and there is a question has an excellent chance if those mark about the trip for this one. exertions have not taken their toll. Danjing: Refused to race on his fore Christmas but failed to stay Outset: Cannot be expected to imthree miles in soft ground last time. prove for last run as he was fit from the Flat. Small horse who may struggle physically.

started now. Moorish: Pulls hard and has to be Runaway Pete: Little chance on this year's form.

Buckhouse Boy: Not the best of Harbour Island: Runs best in jumpers and could miss one out blinkers but even though he has Jathib: Hard to see him winning them on here he should not figure.

impressed me at Cheltenham last week but I feel this tough race Friendship: Unlucky not to com- comes too soon. Friendship has plete a hat-trick when falling at the sound each-way claims but BIG last at Kempton. Each-way claims STRAND is very attractively if that does not dent his confidence. weighted and will carry my fiver.

LEOPARDSTOWN - SUNDAY

2.35 DR P J MORIARTY MEMORIAL NOVICE CHASE (GRADE 2) £50,000 added 2m 5f Penalty Value £32,500
1 1-mm BOSS DOYLE (42) (C) (Mrs A M Daly) M Monts 6 12 0
2 SmB HBLL SOCIETY (70) (BF) (P Garvey) N Meadle 6 12 0
3 11F2F SYMBOL OF SUCCESS (57) (D) (N O T Syndicate) D Williams (GB) 7 12 0
4 1/11-1 PLORIDA PEARL (41) (C) (Mrs V OLESTY) W P Mains 6 11 7
5 23-00 MOUNT DRUID (6) (J Folen) L Bernett 8 11 7
- 5 decisied -
Provide to as State Stand 7 a UK Couley 2 a Rean Coule Of a County Of County of C
BETTING: 10-11 Florida Pearl, 7-4 Hill Society, 7-2 Boss Doyle, 25-1 Syrebol Of Success, 66-1 Mount Druid
1897: Donems Pride 8 to 0 J.P. Broderick 8-ti fav (M. Hourigan) 4 nan
3.40 HENNESSY COGNAC GOLD CUP (GRADE 1 BBC2 CHASE) £100,000 3m Penalty Value £58,000
1 21454 ANABATIC (14) (C) (W.J. Phelan) M.J. O'Brien 10 12 0
2 F.FPPP CORKET (14) (S.J.O'Sulivan) A P.O'Brien 8 12.0 A Doublin 3 1-115 DORANS PRIDE (36) (CD) (8F) (T.J.Doran) M.Hourigan 9 12.0 R.Durmicody 3
4 P-PS4U GO BALLISTIC (19) (D) (Mrs B J Lockhert) J O'Shee (GB) 9 12 0
6 3P-221 BIPERIAL CALL (42) (CD) fulsation Family Commands (30) to 22 July 2 Ju
7 48212 MERRY GALE (6) (C) (GF) (H M Starley) J Dreater 10 2 0
8 43-03U DUN BELLE (10) (D) Oirs A Connolly! P Faby 9 11 9TP Tready
-8 declared -
BETTING: 11-10 Dorans Pride, 11-8 Imperial Cell, 7-1 Merry Gale, 12-1 Go Baltietic, 25-1 Her-
mes Harvest, 40-1 Anshistic, Corket, 50-1 Dun Belle
1997: Danoli 9 12 0 T P Treacy 6-1 (T Folley) 8 ran

FIRST SHOW

Utte	xete	r- 1	.45	
Horse	C	H	L	
Lucia Fosta	5-2	11-4	3-1	5-2
Royale Ampela	11-2	7-1	61	7-1
Dicken	6-1	7-1	61	7-1
Metaytesio	9-1	B-1	6-1	7-1
Daily Boy	10-1	10-1	10-1	8-7
Lough Tully	10-1	10-1	10-1	11-1
Alpertus	3-1	12-1	11-1	114
Royal Piper	12-1	12-1	14-1	14-1
Wiren's Price	14-1	12-1	2-1	14-1
Holdinschae	16-1	14-1	16-1	16-1
Nins () Three	12-1	94-1	16-1	16-1
	25-1	20 1	20-1	20-1
Castle Secret	25-1	16-1	33-1	25-1
Eachway.eq	enter fre	odds, pi	aces 1,	23
C-Coat H-M	細形成と	- Ladbe	des T-	Tota

C - Coral H - William Hill, L - Lactoroles, T - Yole								
Uttoxeter - 2.20								
Horse	C	H	1_	. 7				
Him Of Praise	74	5-2	64	94				
Call E A Day	6-1	11-2	9-2	13-2				
Nahithen Lad	7-1_	<u>5-</u> 1	<u>5-</u> 1	6-1				
Mintell Boy	6-1	7-1	B-1	152				
Ottown.	7-1	8-1	7-1	13-2				
Kamaluza	10-1	91	10-1	9-1				
McGregor The Th	d 6-1	<u>81</u>	10-1	12-1				
Rening Rix	<u>16-1</u>	12-1	16-1	14-1				
idea's Lady	20-1	14-1	14-1	14-1				
Greenith Three Jose	B(2-1	<u>351</u>	33-1	20-1				
Jet Roles	<u>33-1</u>	<u>න</u> ු	33-1	20-1				
	Each way, a fifth the oxids, places 1, 2, 3							
C - Coral H - Wallam Hill L - Ladbroles T - Tota								

Sand	– תאס	3.05	·
Norse	<u>c</u> _	<u> </u>	<u>r</u>
Cytor Mails	54	7-4	150
Jack Doyle	52	94	52
Dr Leura	11-2	11-2	92
Chief's Song	7-1	7-1	13.2
Mayeers King	8-1	54	11-2
Balogy	20-1	20-1	20-1
Each way, a qu	anter the on	ds. piacea	1,2
C-Conal)	l-Willem I	8 T-10	i }
Sand	(TWO	- 4.JO	
Horse	C	H L	1

1)					
		Sand	lown	4	.10	
]		Horse	c	В	L	
J	١.	Big Strand	7.2	7-2	3-1	103
7		Princelul	5-1	11-2	6-1	13-2
1		Friendship	13-2	13-2	6-1	·7-1
ł		Harbour Island	7-1	8-1	7-1	192
1		Mistinguett	9-1	8-1	81	8-1
I		Whip Hand	9-1	_ 81_	B)	81
1		Moorish	10-1	10-1	9-1	9-1
1	.	Outset	<u>B-1</u>	B-1	11-1	11-1
ł		Buckhouse Boy	16-1	161	20-1	18-1.
ł		Darayclac	20-1	16-1	18-1	16-1
1		Purrameny Peta	25-1	25-1	25-1	25-1
j		- (2012)	33-1	33-1	33-1	33-1
١		Danjing	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1
ĺ	1	Fee Claws	33-1	28-1	40-1	40-1
ł		Each way a qu				
1		C-Coral H-Will	am HELL	- Ladh	des T-	The same

2 7

TOTE BOOKMAK	ERS	HAN	· IDIQ	:AP				LYE	A P. 1	raj F
	1988	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97
Pate of the tavourities:	4	3/5	A	4	8	 -	 -	 -	- P	2
Winner's place in batting	F 0	0	A	_ <u>:</u>	~	 -		÷	<u>-</u> -	
Starting-prices:	25-1	20-1	A	8-1	33-1	 .	_ <u></u> -	<u> </u>		
Winning weights:	102	1012		100	100		8-1	3-1	61	
Winner's age:	10	-	<u>~</u>	- -	-	102	9.11	_100	111	1042
Profit or loss to £1 stake	Foun				5_	_6_	_ 9	. 7	.0	- 8
Shortest-priced winners p	eced .	Man N	nd or	3rd ir	lest (eca; (ibes -: 37%	ē450_		<u> </u>
Longest-priced winner: 5	وبرطا		-	~ ==	_					<u> </u>
rop trainer; J FitzGerald -	٠.	ed Vo								
Tap Jockey: M Dwyer - Sp	ecial \	/intag	PE (191	gal Ilia Nacadr	Haing Hinglot	(1993) (1993)	93 & 1)	996}	-	

1.40 HELEN MCINNES MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £5,000 added 3YO 1m 2f

(CLASS D) £5,000 added 3YO 1m 2f

22-22 APPABO (11) M Quart 9 0 ... A Wholan 9

2 0-4884 FALKENBERG [FH) (4) 8 Peaces 9 0 ... C Lambre (3) 2 8

3 0335- NARHOGEN (USA) (100) M Chemon 9 0 ... A Mackey 3

4 04 NETTA RUPHA (9) M Johnston 8 0 ... Dean Mickeyan 4

5 66 SURRAA (30) M Polysber 8 0 ... Dean Mickeyan 4

6 2 EASY VIRTUE (18) (BF) G 1 Moore 6 9 ... Cardy Monts 1

8 declared - 8 declared 2.10 AGATHA CHRISTIE SELLING HANDI-CAP (CLASS G) £2,500 added 1m 5f

6000 AS-S (37) (C) M Johnson 49 82 Decision O'Shara 3 3210P MILNIGAVIE (23) (C) B Makkett 6 9 7 Decision O'Shara 3 34222 HEAD GARDENIER (8) N Literation 4 9 6 S Whitmorth 6 B 65360 POLEYS QUEST (AKZ) (S Moore 4 9 3 P Marphy (3) 6 5060 ROWLANDSONS CHARM (74) (C) Miss B Sanders 5 9 2 Color 8 9

2.40 MARGERY ALLINGHAM HANDICAP (CLASS D) 25,000 added 3YO 1m 21 21-22 MSTARGGUE (11) (CD) R Harmon 97 ... P Dobbs (7) 3.
4-28 GLIDER (7) (CN I Lennoter 96 ... S Walterent 2
G3-11 NISABA ET) (CD) J S Moore 96 ... P P Harmon 97 ...
50646 ARCITIC STAP (S6) M O'erron 95 ... P Cleary (7) 7
0004-0 GENULS (S7) S Dow 91 ... W Ryam 6
000- FRANCE FERRAR (118) D Loder 81 ... K Fellon 4 V
- 6 declared TTIMG: 84 Nisabn. 52 Walterbronnes. 11-2 Clinice 13-2 Franklin Ex-

Mr R Waldey (3)

- 5 declared -BETTRIG: 6-4 Nisabe, 5-2 Mystagogue, 11-2 Gider, 13-2 Frankle Fer-rert, 7-1 Arctic Star, 12-1 Gentus 3.15 GEORGETTE HEYER CLAIMING LIM-ITED STAKES (F) £3,000 3YO 7f

3.45 EVELYN ANTHONY HANDICAP (CLASS D) £5,000 added 1m

1 SI-R2 PLAN FOR PROFIT (14) (CD) M Johnston 4 (10) — Osen McKeown 3

2 0-1411 URSA MAJOR (9) (CD) C Allen 4 9 11 — A Stadholme (7) 4

3 5-252 BARBASON (2) (CD) G L Moore 6 9 5 — Candy Morris 6

4 00-001 BLUE RIVER (11) (CD) R Ingram 5 8 11 — A McGloom 5 B 2 26-5 KAFL (9) (CD) J Bridger 4 8 10 — D Harrison 2 105-6 MARIL (9) (CD) J Bridger 4 8 10 D O'Dren 4 8 8 — G Bardwell 1 — 6 declared — - 6 declared -BETTING: 7-4 Urae Major, 9-4 Plan For Profit, 4-1 Barbeson, 5-1 Blue Flyer, 12-1 Bailleborough Boy, 16-1 Keff

4.20 DOROTHY L SAYERS HANDICAP (CLASS E) 23,750 added 71

1 33-11 WITCHENDER (7) (CD) Mrs. L Sachs 8: 10 L S Writhworth 8 V 2,43643 SCSSOR RIDGE (4) (CD) J Bridge 6: 18 13 ... R Sautholina (7) 5

3 002-10 MR PARADISE (28) (0) R Covel 4: 9 7 ... W Ryse 2

4 02221 CASTLE ASHRY JAKK (7) (CD) P Howing 4: 93, D Holland 3

5 0300-0 DAYRELLA (11) (C) W JAW 4: 8: 10 ... K Fallon 8

5 00-03 ADGMAN (10) N Lithnoder 6: 7: 3 ... A Day (3) 7

7 0-05-5 OUR SHADEE (11) (C) (C) K hory 8: 7: 0 ... Martin Dayre 1: V 8

5 00-000 INTO DEST (11) (CD) J Policins 5: 7: 10 ... Martin Dayre 1: V 8

6 deckered

WOLVERHAMPTON

HYPERION 7.00 African-Pard 7.30 Elite Hope 8.00 Time To Fly 8.30 Hopeful Star 9.00 Chahaya Timor 9.30 Mazeed GOING: Standard. STALLS: Inside DRAW ADVANTAGE: High.

GOING: Sizneard, Si ALLS: riside DHAW ADVANTAGE: High.

© Fibresand surface: left-hand course.

© Course is SE of town on B2028 Station adjoins course. ADMBS8004: Cut.of St. Tetrerales IS CAR PARK: Free.

© LEADING THANHETS: H Hollinsheed 61-604 (101%), M Johnston 55-250 (22%), A Balley 33-233 (113%), P Evens 31-325 (93%),

© LEADING JOCKEYS: S Sanders 39-339 (118%), Dean McKeown 25-341 (108%), J Cutinn 25-395 (63%), A Clark 24-23 (113%),

© FAVOURTES: 334 wins from 1957 races (22%),

BLUNKERIED FIRST TIME: Golden Sectale (800). 7.00 CHATEAU HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,000

SETTING: 7-2 African-Pard, 11-2 Korarejer Dancer, Zemast, 19-2 Big Beng, Grovetair Lad, 7-1 Ordained, Round Robin, 10-1 Others

7.30 CASTLE CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS F) £3,000 added 51 23,000 added 6f

1 0-3-24 MARCE BOURLE pag (CD BF) Gay fictions 4 9 2 LifeBon 6 B

2 3-101 Suffe Hope (10) (CD) N Trider 6 8 0 ... Dean Mickanown 3

3 06-0-0 YOUNG BENEON (10) (C) T Wal 6 6 13 ... Liverson 4 8

4 4006 TALLAN SYMPHONY (CS) (CD) P Ears 4 8 1 A Michaelty (9) 2V

5 05-628 MALLAGH HALLAD (10) (C) T Number 5 8 11 ... S Williams 5 B

6 0705 DANNE MESS P (142 (D) A LIVER 5 B 10 ... D Sweamay (3) 1

7 500-06 C-HARRY (10) (CD) P Holherhead 4 9 Funch 7

B 3006-4 TICKA TICKA TIMING (5) (D) B Martay 5 8 3 ... Fighton (7) 8

- 8 declared
BETTING: 5-4 Elike Hope, 4-1 Milan's Double, 5-1 Diviso Milan's 7-1 Mallan's Symphony; 10-1 C-Harry, 14-1 Mullagh Hill Led, 16-1 others

8.00 PROVINCIAL RACING CREDIT CENTRE HANDICAP (CLASS D) 25,000 added 61 52-111 TIME TO FLY (14) (CD) B Murray 5 10 0.... D Senterray (3) 4 B 0001-0 DOUBLE-0 (19) (CD) W Janis 4 9 G. 55000- ANTONIAS NEL-0007 (5) (D) 58 B Rowring 5 9 G.C. Timppe (3) 3552-4 EASTERN PROPRIETS (37) (D) (SF) G Lenes 5 9 5... A Clark 2 - 4 declared -BETTING: 5-6 Time To Fly, 7-4 Eastern Prophess, 4-1 Double-O, 16-1 other 8.30 LODGE MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) \$4,000 added 1m 1f 79yds

- 8 decisted -BETTING: 7-4 Scree Might Say, 5-2 Neked Out, 4-1 Wrought Iron, 6-1 Hopolul Star, 10-1 Bin Fee, 25-1 Absolute Breeze, 33-1 others 9.00 MAISON SELLING STAKES (CLASS G) £2,500 added 2m 46yds 224; CHANNA TIMOR (10) (2) Mes S Willon 63 8... S Whitmorth 7

O FRANKICE HARRY (20) A Carol 6 9 5... R Stacholme (7) 3

EVALUATE (10) F Lucies 6 9 5... R Stacholme (7) 3

EVALUATE (10) F Lucies 6 9 5... S Stacholme (7) 3

OUD DAFFODL EXPRESS (11) M Ryan 5 9 0... P McCabe (3) 2

OUD S LANDRA (8) C Pocharin 8 9 0... S Sandres 8

400-02 FLOTILLA (19) S Meta 4 8 13... Journe Badger (7) 6 B

- 6 declared -BETTING: 2-5 Chehaye Timor, 7-1 Flotille, 8-1 Lancer, 14-1 Zesti, Gold-en Saddie, 25-7 Zendra, 33-1 Others 9.30 PROVINCIAL RACING HANDICAP (CLASS E) 53,500 added 1m 1f 79yds

كاذا من ألاصل

Dawn to enhance Alner's golden feeling

With each success this season a 10-year-old former hunter chaser has been entering more and more notebooks as a possible for jumping's greatest prize at the Cheltenham Festival.

Today, as Richard Edmondson reports, that winning run should continue at Sandown.

When the bugle sounds each morning at Locketts Farm in the Dorset village of Droop there is always one slacker who remains glued to his camp bed.

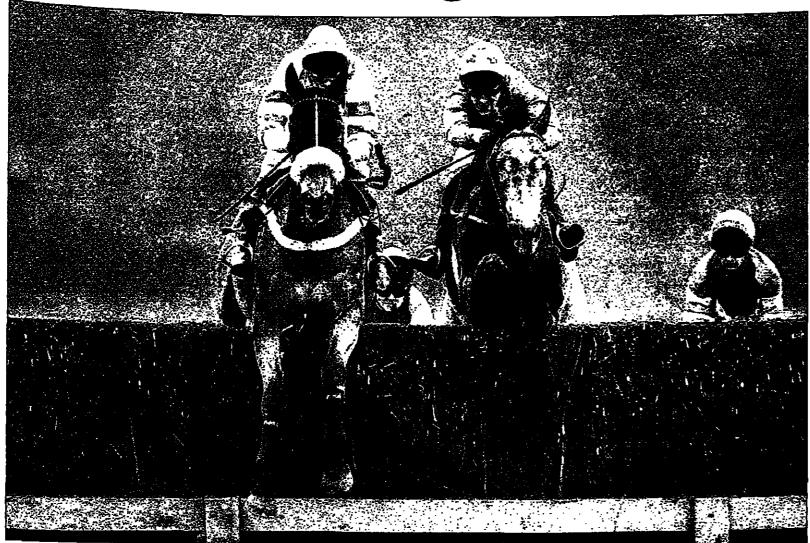
Cool Dawn has the reputation of being the laziest creature at Robert Ainer's racing stables, but it is a trait his trainer can handle as the 10-year-old is quite the opposite on the track.

Three times at Ascot this season we have seen the gelding run his opponents into the soil. As he has been repelling all boarders, the horizon has been pushed further back and there are now some judges who believe Cool Dawn can be an influence in the Cheltenham Gold Cup itself.

Alner does not disagree but considers his horse will have to improve about a stone between now and 19 March to be a factor. "I'm not bullish about the Gold Cup at all because there are classier horses about," he said. "But they've got to be fit and well on the day, as mine has. Sillier things have happened. So far ours has done nothing wrong, and when he does we can think again."

Cool Dawn has been a tremendous hunter chaser in his time and was runner-up to Elegant Lord in the Foxhunters at the Festival in 1996. He went on to finish third in the Irish National. Last season was something of a washout as he injured a check ligament on his only start at Sandown, but it did stop the body clock running. Cool Dawn (3.35) will be having only his 12th race under Rules when he sets out in the Agfa Diamond

Chase at Sandown today. It could even be that he is improving, judged on his most re-



Champleve (right) confirms his Aride Trophy potential as he jumps upsides Coolinny on the way to success at Lingfield yesterday

cent win. "The horse is fine and that last run will have done him good," Alner said. "He was taken on by Go Ballistic which made him have a race. Carrying 12st in that sticky ground was absolutely ideal because it made him do a bit of work."

The other televised races from Esher are harder to call. Marello puts her unbeaten record following three bumpers and six hurdles in its greatest jeopardy yet in the Agfa Hurdle. Three of her rivals met at Kempton's Christmas meeting and Shadow Leader (2.30) came out best even though he was in need of the run and was bussed in from a stable that was

more like a sick bay at the time. The most valuable race on the card is actually a Scilly Isles ly stocked with Festival aspirants. Cyfor Malta will be well fancied. but on this ground Jack Doyle (3.05) is a better option.

Mistinguett (4.10) is back to form and should follow up last Saturday's win in the Cleeve

RICHARD EDMONDSON NAP: Nahthen Lad (Uttoxeter 2.20) **NB: Strong Chairman** (Uttoxeter 1.15)

Hurdle, while Dean Gallagher's wish in the closing novice hurdle will be simply that he gets round in one piece on Claudia Electric. He is now the only one of the "weighing room three" in working condition.

The most important news of the day, of course, concerns Ut-Novices' Chase which is heavitoxeter, where a new, improved

hard-working men and women who keep the sport going.

The day's largest pot is at the Midlands track and connected to the Singer & Friedlander National Trial, which is an Aintree rial in more than name as 12 months ago it was collected by Lord Gyllene. The distance of the contest has been reduced but it will still need a beast with considerable constitution to succeed. NAHTHEN LAD (nap

2.20) is the one to be on. A plausible candidate for the Royal & SunAlliance Chase runs in the opener. Paul Nicholls rates Strong Chairman (next best 1.15) as potentially the best horse he has trained.

Cheltenham opposition for the Chairman will be on view at Leopardstown tomorrow. Flori-

press box will be unveiled for the da Pearl, last year's Festival bumper winner, will be the favourite here, but it will be no cakewalk with the likes of Boss Doyle and Hill Society, who are undefeated in seven completed starts over fences between them, in the field.

The focus of the card though is the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup, in which Go Ballistic and Hermes Harvest form the British representation in a race which may deliver the Gold Cup favourite. Jodami and Imperial Call have used it as a platform for Blue Riband success and the latter again turns up for duty tomorrow. His most dangerous rival is Dorans Pride, who has worked well since having a bad air day last month at Naas. where he finished in "respira-

Cheltenham for Champleve

There were some nervous spectators at Lingfield yesterday as Champleve made his debut over fences. Martin Pipe's five-yearold had been backed from 20-1 to 12-1 for the Arkle Chase at the Cheltenham Festival, despite the fact that it had never jumped

anything bigger than a hurdle. But anyone who had backed Champleve need not have worried as Tony McCoy steered the French-bred horse home five lengths clear of Gipsy Geof. His Arkle odds were immediately reduced to 10-1 after the win.

"He did it very nicely, jumped well and kept going," Pipe said of his 4-7 winner.

> have gone on to other things, Oakes said. "I'm daft enough to

victory.

still be here competing. "I'm lucky to have found ry on while I'm in one piece, while first.

new generation I can do myself justice and until someone better comes along."

Oakes' golden

On the weekend Judy

Oakes won her first

national title, Kevin

and Steve Heighway

in a 3-0 FA Cup win

Keegan, John Toshack

scored Liverpool's goals

against Carlisle United.

Simon Turnbull talks to the

shot putter who is still

going for gold 21 years

This year may be the dawn of

a new era for British athletics

-what with no Christie, no Gun-

Olympic champion and no

money - but one thing about the

sport remains reassuringly the

same. In Birmingham this

weekend Judy Oakes will be

challenging for a national title.

land Indoor Championships,

held at the National Indoor

Arena today and tomorrow,

happens to mark the 21st an-

niversary of the first senior suc-

cess achieved by the

shot-putting phenomenon from

"I don't think I can remem-

ber," Oakes said, attempting to

cast her mind back to 28 Janu-

ary, 1977, the Friday night she

putted 15.87 metres at Cosford

to wrest the women's AAA in-

door title from Janis Kerr of

"I think I had pigtails then,"

she continued, after a pause for

reflective thought. "That's all I

can picture. It's such a long time

It is that. In the men's events

that weekend the 60m was won

by Allan Wells, Daley Thomp-

jump and a 20-year-old Lough-

borough University student by

the name of Sebastian Coe an-

nounced his arrival at senior lev-

el with an impressive 800m

"Obviously all those guys

Croydon Harriers.

Mitcham AC.

ago, you know."

It was ever thus, it seems.

later.

talent glows for

That might be a while yet. One week short of her 40th birthday, Oakes remains the best in Britain - and by some distance. Last summer she topped the British rankings by more than a metre, with 18.42m. This winter she has already putted 18.56m indoors.

Oakes is also a clear leader of the Commonwealth rankings, which bodes well for Kuala Lumpur in September. Barring injury and a sudden loss of form, she will not just be defending the title in Malaysia, but attempting to collect a sixth successive Comnell, no reigning world or monwealth Games medal too.

If that were not sufficient testimony to an enduringly successful athletics career, consider Oakes' record collection of national titles - 40 at last count. "Each one feels just like the

first," she said. And the odds are on her savouring win number 41 The View From AAA of Engtomorrow afternoon, despite competition from an athlete who stood on the medal rostrum at the World Championships last

Denise Lewis may be the world's second-best heptathlete, judging by her silver-medal performance in Athens, but she is only the ninth-best shot putter in Britain. The multitalented Midlander, like Oakes preparing for the defence of a Commonwealth title this year. has also entered the 60m hurdles and the long jump.

Jonathan Edwards, the other World Championship individual medallist in action, may not confine himself to the triple jump, in which he hopes to threaten Keith Connor's 17year-old British indoor record, 17.31m. The Gateshead Harrison finished second in the long er, who jumped 17.23m in Tampere, Finland, on Wednesday night, is among the entrants for

> So is the hottest new property in British athletics, the scorchingly fast Dwain Chambers. The 19-year-old Londoner, who set a world junior 100m record of 10.06sec last summer. will be chasing his first senior national title. He had yet to be born when Judy Oakes won her

GREG WOOD THE A-Z OF BETTING

U is for . . .

Union Jack: A bet which is filled in on one of those bright- Unseated rider: Polite way of

a candy shop. And the similarity Lucky 15s. Goliaths and the rest money just as surely as sherbet dip will rot your teeth. Of all such bets, though, the Union Jack is probably the most brazen. Nine selections are entered in three rows of three, and settled as eight trebles - the horizontal rows, the vertical columns, and the two diagonals. As a result, it is possible to have as many as five winners among your nine choices and still not receive a crooked farthing in return, which must be the closest thing to legalised mugging that the gambling laws allow.

irritating way to see your cash does not end there, since disappear. Even the best jockmistake of forgetting to hang on, will eat away at your punting but steering clear of novice chases and learner riders usuto an acceptable minimum.

> moment at which the race is deemed to have started, and in Flat races at least, a bet is a runner even if the animal you placed it on is not. Rules over the sticks are a little different these days, and the starter can declare a horse a non-runner if it refus- true ability from the prying eyes es to set off with the rest. In prac- of those whom it need not contice, however, it is still not cern (the owner, for example). jumps race to come under orders when half of them are still cir-

which are dotted around a bet- your horse for little or no ap- at least two have planted their boards and trot up in a hack can- here, of course, is that no one hooves so firmly that it is clear ter. Unless, of way when the rest of the field ally pares down these mishaps comes round for the second time, irate punters burn down the grandstand, and the starter knowledge of a job well done.

> Unexposed: This can describe plies especially to one whose unknown for the field for a At the appointed time, probably "quiet" runs, the beast in ques-

ly coloured, pre-printed slips saying that the jockey fell off cling 30 yards from the start, and tion will be backed off the the case. The obvious problem couple lose 20 lengths, the lesson that it will still get fed even favourite is still facing the wrong if its finishes second, in which soon turn out to be . . .

> Under Starter's Orders: The retires for a cuppa, happy in the an unpleasant way of describing and saying: Look at that smarts. By nature, the thoroughbred is a flight animal, trainer has carefully hidden its are trying to survive on a predator-infested steppe somewhere

nothing short of an electric cat- straining tactics in earlier races the horses that no, we don't want tle prod will persuade them to and/or its naturally lazy dispo- you to stick together, we want Union Jacks, Round Robins, eys occasionally make the basic race. The tapes go up, all but a sition have taught it the valuable you to try and win. Statistics show that only 20 per cent of horses ever win any sort of race case any sensible horse will very at all, which probably means that the remaining 80 per cent trotting along behind are shaking Ungennine: Which is really just their heads in astonishment a racehorse with a dose of the showoff. He must be bonkers.

Unlucky: It had never won beany horse with less than half a and also one with a deep-seat- youd a mile, on ground any easdozen races to its name, but ap- ed herding instinct, both of ier than good to firm, on an which are traits to cherish if you undulating track, going left handed or with anyone but Frankie in the saddle. You in Asia Minor. In the horse's backed it over 12 furlongs at Epnatural environment, a desire to som the day after a cloudburst. stride clear of the pack could be with a 7lb claimer up. Was there in a nursery handicap after three positively stricidal, but on the any problem with your logic? Of racetrack, quite the opposite is course not. It was just unlucky.

WETHERBY

1,20 What's Your Story 1.50 Celestial Choir 2.25 Niger's Lad 2.55 Cattly Hang 3.30 Wahiba Sands 4.00 Provid Sun 4.35 Native Recruit

4.00 Problet Stiff 4.35 Native Receited
GORNG: Good (Good to Soft in pisces)

Leth-rend oval circuit. Run-in of 200yds slightly uphil.

Course is NE of town on Br224 near junction of AS8 and A1
ADMISSION. Cab Stif. Tattersalls St; Course S3 (OAPs 82). Accomparised under Ais tree. CAR PARK: Free.

LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNIERS: Mrs M Reveloy 4423 (223%), G Richards 34-III (26%), T Easterby 22-82 (25%).

D Nicholson 19-70 (273%)

LEADING JOCKETS: L Wyer 41-182 (253%). A Dobbin 20-118
(153%), R Guest 17-63 (205%). P Carberry 14-57 (246%).

FAVOURITES: 203 wins from 473 races (42.9%).

BLINKGRED FIRST TIME: None.

1.20 SPOFFORTH HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) 25,500 added 2m 7f

972 902

974 984

973 983

ACEVERHAMPTON (C 975 965

ALL COURSES RESULTS

0891 261 970

Calls coal Silp per annulo, TLS.pk, Senator S. R.C.A. 47)

410-11 CELESTIAL CHOIR (21) (CD) J L Byes 8 11 8 ... BETTING: 1-4 Celestial Chok, 4-1 Bobby Grant, 12-1 Neuton Met, 33-1

2.25 RIEVAULX HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS B) 28,000 added 2m

7 2-2111 ONCE MORE FOR LUCK (F17)(CD) Mrs M Reveloy 7 10 5

BETTING: 9-4 Spendid, 7-2 Invest Wisely, 4-1 What's Your Story, 5-1 Clympian, 7-1 Mr Christin, 8-1 Kinds Groovy

1.50 SKIPTON NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) 25,000 added 2m 4f 110yds

ratain, 8-1 Break The Rules, 10-1 Stash The Cash, 20-1 5

3.30 ROSSINGTON MAIN NOVICE HURDLE (GRADE 2) (CLASS A) £14,000 2m

4.00 HAROLD CHARLTON MEMORIAL HUN-TER CHASE (CLASS H) £1,500 3m 1f

2.55 MARSTON MOOR HANDICAP CHASE 6 POP24 SHUIL SAOR (232) Mess P Friton 11 10 __Mr C Multipal (7) (CLASS B) £12,000 added 2m 4f 110yds - 6 deciared -BETTING: 4-5 Proud Sun, 9-4 Tecton Mill, 7-1 Postage Stamp, 14-1 High-

1	35	WEATHERBYS OPEN NH	FLAT RACE
	.00	WEATHERBYS OPEN NH (CLASS H) £1,500 added	1 2m
1		LUGGSY (99) (D) N Twiston-Devices 6 11 11	
2	ĩ	MR BUSBY (21) (D) Mrs M Reveloy 5 Ti 11	M Herrington (7)
3		BALLINA BOY J FitzGerald 5 ft 4	F Lealty (3)
4		CAMDEN FELLOW Mrs M Jones 5 11 4	
5	3	CHOICE CLIT (14) T Caldwell 5 11 4	
6	P	CRAZY HORSE (7) L Lungo 5 ft 4	Mr B Gibson (7)
7	2	MR JAKE (105) H Haynes 5 11 4	R Thermion
В		NATIVE RECRUIT D Nanoison 5 to 4	
8		CUTTERBURN LAD Mrs J Brown 5 11 4	
10	0	SHAGREEN (56) J Dunlop 5 11 4	Mr H Dunlop (7)
Ħ	4	SPOOPS MY GAME (14) T Easterby 5 11 4	
12	026	TELL MONTY (21) Mrs J Brown 6 11 4	,
13	1	C'EST MOI LAURÉL (FR) (32) (D) Miss V V	Watern 8 4 11 1
		GEM OF HOLLY (75) R Wood 5 10 18	P Carberry
14	0-0	GEM OF HOLLY (75) R Wood 5 10 13	
15		VALLEY OF HOME Mrs M REVAILEY 5 TO 13.	G L00
16		BRAVE MAN M W Easierby 4 TO B	
17		HARDACRE T Res 4 10 8	R Cantly
18		HELMSLEY FLER T Easterby 4 108	
19		OWTABEATIM R Woodhouse 4 10 B	
20		ROCKY MY BOY Mrs S Smith 4 108	
21		WILL SCAPLET J K Cresswell 4 10 8	
22		ALU-LADY M W Easterby 4 10 3	R Suppre

22 ALU-Laut at Wesserry 4 to 3
SERIGE POSTAGE STAMP (803) (BF) F Murphy 11 11 10.

BETTING: 3-1 C'Est Mol Laurel, 6-1 Notice Recent, 7-1 Luggey, Nr Bushy, 8-1 Spoofs My Game, 12-1 Mr Jake, Heimsley Filer, 14-1 others

THE INDEPENDENT CATTERICK

2.00: 1. JESSICA ONE (P Nven) 7-4 tay;
2. Recissary 16-1; 3. Gianbower 5-2, 12 ran,
3. 1. (Mrs M Ravelay, Saltburn) Tota: 53-10;
5130, 5130, 510 Dual Forecast £48-50. CSF:
5312, Trio: £104-50.
2.30: 1. LORD FORTUNE (R Garritty) 72; 2. Apache Raider 33-1; 3. Hartdecent
5-1. 11 ran, 9-4 tay Dawn Masson (guiled up),
31/s, hd. (M Hammond, Middletham), Tota:
5500; £160, \$3.0, £2.30. Df; \$34.00. CSF:
51008, Trio: \$3550, Non Runners; Carley Lad,
Medischon. CATTERICK RACING SERVICES LIVE COMMENTARIES RESULTS 971 981

RACING RESULTS

E1018. This: \$28581 NOT the least of the Addischort.

3.00: 1. RECRUITMENT (All Horocks) 112: 2. One Stop 7-2 it fav; 3. Malinabad 20-1; 4. Garre Assay 20-1 17 ren. 7-2 it fav Highfield Pet (6th). 12, hd. (J. Turner, York). Tota: \$590; £150; £210; \$236; \$450; Dr. 5: 2280; \$250; £150; £210; \$236; \$450; Dr. 5: 2280; \$250; £150; £170;

Sty, Peterborough), Tota: £3:30; £1:30, £2:90.
DF: £7:40. CSF: £1:50.
4.00: 1. ARCTIC FOX (P Niven) 4-1 fav.;
2. Noddie 5-1; 3. Riot Leader 5-1. 11 ran.;
4.6; 6, (Nr. M Reveley, Salthurn), Tote: \$4:0;
£1:40, £2:90. £2:50. DF: £2:00. CSF: £2:58.
Tricast: £0:083. Tiot; £17:10. NRts: Nasstyet,
Materibat Milita.

4.30: 1. COUNT TONY (R Garritty) 4-5 4.30: 1. CUANT I DAT (IT CATRY) 4-3 fav; 2. Panocora Lord 33-1; 3. Storing 7-2. 10 ran. 7, ¼. (M Harmond, Middleham). Tota: £160; £100, £150, £170. DF; £74.0 CSF-£2022 Trio: £20710. Jackpot: £508.50. Placepot: £1900. Quadpot: £780. Place 6: £5125. Place 5: £3428.

LINGFIELD 1.40: 1. GALLANT TAFFY (A P McCoy)
2-1 tav; 2. Illuminate 5-1; 3. Miurray's Mil10n 5-1; 4. Sheriakarındi 9-1 17 ran. 3'/s,
10. (M Pipe, Weifington). Totas 52.90; 5120,
5140, 5170, 5190. DF: 51300. CSF: \$1656.

Tricast: £60.42 Trio: £1190. Non Parmer: Palace Parade.
2.10: 1. CHAMPLEVE (A P McCoy) 4-7 tax; 2. Glosy Geof 7-1; 3. Mousse Bird ti-8.5 ran. 5. 11 (M Pipe, Welfington). Tota: £160; £120; £180. DF; £3.80. CSF; £5.38.
2.40: 1. BORAZZON (C Llewellyn) 2-5 fax; 2. Aboo Hom 13-2; 3. Tyrotean Dream 5-1, 7 ran. 4. dipt. (N Twiston-Devies, Chelterhem). Tota: £130; £10; £3.60. DF; £3.40. CSF; £3.62. NR: Amnouncing.
3.10: 1. THE EXECUTOR (C Llewellyn) 100-30; 2. Mega Tid 7-1; 3. Lucy Tufty 7-2. 8 ran. 3-1 fav Hever Golf Diamond (pused up). 2, 7 (R O'Sullivan, Whiteombe). Tota: £300; £200. ECT; £120. DF; £600. CSF; £2581. Tricast: £8144. No bid for the winner.

SOUR PART, PAPOL STATE STATE DF; E1500, CSF: C2583. Thicast: 2814. No bid for the winner. 3.40: 1. ORSWELL LAD (Mr R Widger) 8-4 fay; 2. Call Home 10-1; 3. Foodbroker Star 11-4 5 ran, 3½, 25. IP Hobbs, Minsheed. Tota: C2.20; 5:10. C380. DF: £1240. CSF: £103.

Tricast: £60.42 Trio: £1190. Non Rurner:
Palace Parade.
2.10: 1. CHAMPLEVE (A P McCoy) 4-7
tav: 2. Gipsy Geof 7-1; 3. Mouse Bird 158.5 ran. 5. 1; M Pipe, Welington). Totac £120. CF: £250. CF: £367. Trio: £570.
4.40: 1. MON AMIE (A Thornson) 7-1; 2. Normania 10-1; 3. Equity's Darling 15-1 102.10. £180. DF: £380. CSF: £388. Normania 10-1; 3. Equity's Daning 16-1 10 ran, 9-4 for Talle Cover (unseated rider); 13, 11. (A-Hobbs, Kingsbridge), Tota: £260; £230, £260; £240 DF: £5300 CSF: £4128. Tifeast: £1016:18. Tifo: £10300. Placepot: £770. Quadpot: £330. Place 6: £047. Place 6: £439.

SOUTHWELL

1.50: 1. DANCING RIO (C Lowther) 8-1; 2. Danzino evens tar; 3. Poetto 7-1 11 ran. 2, 'A. (F Hastam) Tota: £100; £170, £120, £190, DF: £570, CSF: £588, Tricast: £8188. £190, DF: £570, CSF: £1588, Incast: £6148, Tho: £840 2.20: 1. ROCK ISLAND LINE (P Bradley) 5-1; 2. Yeoman Oliver 3-1; 3. Pine Ridge Lad 7-1.9 ran. hd. 8. (J Berry), Tota: £5.60; £210, £100, £350, DF: £860, CSF: £858, Pho: £210, £100, £350, DF: £860, CSF: £858, Pho: £210, £100, £350, DF: £860, CSF: £858, Pho: 4.10: 1. SIMONS CASTLE (N Willamson)

but after a stewards' inquiry, the first two placings were reversed. 2.50: 1. OK BABE (D Biggs) 6-1; 2. Em-Ment 15-8 fay; 3. Fast Franc 9-2, 11 ran. rk, 1 (J Aleshurst). Tota: £550; £240, £180, £120 DF: £530. CSF: £1651. Tricast £56.75. Tho: 5530 NF: Rockswain.
3.20: 1. WILD CANARY (W Ryan) 12-1;
2. Miracha Island 1-5 tav; 3. Highbury Legend 25-1 6 ran. 2, 22 (Lord Huntingdon) Toke 61320; 6300, 6100 DF: 5450 CSP;
51408.
3.50: 1. PICKENS (Kim Tinkler) 5-2.

3.50: 1. PICKENS (Km Tinkin) 5-2; 2. 5. Smart 9-1; 3. Ruth's Gamble 33-1; 13 ran, 11-10 fav State Approval (4th; 14, 10. (Don 10-10 incise). Tota: \$4.50; £1.50, £2.60, £3.20. DF: £2.00. CSF: £3.90. Tito: £4.260, 4.26: 1. EVEZIO RUFFO (P Roberts) 7-2; 2. Moonraiding 2-1 fav; 3. Fladd of Vision 7-2, 6 ran, 6, 5, N. Littmoden). Tota: £3.70; £3.91 (2.70, 10-2, 6.90). CSF. £3.70; 11-2, 6.90, CSF. £3.70; 11-2, 6.90 £130, £170, DF: £310, CSF: £10.52 Placepot: £7.20. Quadpot: £2.50. Place 6: £2040. Place 5: £1449.

The property of the second of

SPORT ON THE INTERNET

Watch and listen with wire on ice

Nagano might have come in for Away from the official site, criticism as a venue for the Win- the indispensable, though imter Olympics, but it has a lot go-probably named Yahoo! ing for it as a virtual location Internet Life: Wire and Ice on the Web - easy access, facts Guide to the Winter Olympics and figures, video highlights, is a comprehensive collecand browser-testing software. tion of resources for access to In the run-up, the perfor- results, reports and a sport-by-

mance of the official Web site sport guide which should was shaky. However, on the prove useful to anyone ignoeve of the Games it started to rant of the new events such as work properly. Given that it's curling and snowboarding or a graphically rich site, infor- NHL fans keen to see how mation on the results, venues, their version of ice hockey dif-

the news page there is a To send fan mail and search RealAudio feed to the for athletes home pages the Olympic FM radio station animation-heavy IBM Fan which is broadcasting in Eng- Mail page is worth a visit. lish, French and Japanese British bobsleighers Richard until 22 February.

television channel, with here, but Alberto Tomba's archive material going back to home page is absent. October is up and running. If you're fed up with the

loadable screensaver poses site ideologies. less technical problems.

events, athletes and countries fers from the Olympic version. is reasonably quick to access. There are also links to the tra-Text-based information is ditional Web sports sites such the first port of call, but via as CBS, CNN and ESPN. Budgett and Lenny Paul have Similarly, a Web-based their own pages linked from

Both TV and radio feeds rely views of reporters and athletes on your browser having you could always try following RealPlayer 5.0. plug-ins in- the Olympic diary of a specstalled - links to appropriate tator and volunteer at the download sites are provided. Games. Jim, an American For those with muscular living and working in Japan for PCs and a lot of patience the past four years, has such there is a 3D virtual tour of an online diary. "I present a the venues. Links for the clear, unclouded perspective necessary software are pro- free of bias, prejudgement, or vided, although guarantees of an over-reliance on truth," he it working with any particular writes. Could be a refreshing system are not. The down- alternative to official Web

ADDRESSES

Nagano 1998 Official Site http://www.nagano.clympic.org/index.html Yahoo! Internet Life: Wire & ice Guide To The Winter Olympics http://www.zdnet.com/yil/content/mag/9802/olympictoc.html IBM FanMall http://www.fanmail.olympic.ibm.com/ Official Alberto Tombe Web Site http://www.alberto.tomba.it/e/ Index.htm

Nagano Olympic Diary http://www2.gol.com/users/jnoadley/nagano.

French danger signals have Woodward on his guard

Sporting sages are forever reminding us that a team are only as good as their last game, but England's barnstorming assault on the All Blacks at Twickenham in December continues to

deflect attention from one uncomfortable fact: they have now gone six Tests without a win.

Chris Hewett says victory in Paris this afternoon would be worth its weight in gold.

Brian Moore's pitbullish assertion that playing the French at rugby was like facing 15 Eric Cantonas" was meant - and taken - as an insult, but England would far rather lock horns with a Parisian street gang of kung-fu-kicking pseudo-poets than with the unknown quantities selected to launch the Galat the Stade de France today. Any red-blooded Englishman worth his salt knew precisely how to provoke the Cantona combustibles into self-

destruct mode, but what about Raphael Ibanez, Thomas Dominici? Can these newcomers be persuaded to blow a collective gasket?

The one thing that really worries Clive Woodward, Lawrence Dallaglio and the rest of the English hierarchy is the thought that this unfamiliar French side, led as it is by a rookie captain and stacked with ball-playing loose forwards rather than hit-men the size of Matterhorns, will prove disciplined as well as rapid, calm as well as imaginative.

Something tells me that the French are at their most dangerous right now," said Woodward yesterday.

England's coach believes that the 50-point shellacking inflicted on Les Tricolores by the French rugby hinterland, they Springboks in November was, if

lic game into the 21st century not quite a blessing in disguise a salutary experience in the sense that it gave Jean-Claude Skrela and Pierre Villepreux, his opposite numbers, the chance to create a fresh side in their own expansive image.

Lievremont and Christophe a rugby purist with very definite ideas on how this game of ours should be played," Woodward said. "This is his opportunity to

tures of Philippe Saint-André,

"Villepreux, in particular, is put those ideas into place." Hence the abrupt depar-

Thierry Lacroix, Olivier Merle and Laurent Cabannes from the equation. The new broom has swept aside Laurent Leflamand, David Venditti and Abdel Benazzi, too. Not even Marc Dal Maso, perhaps the best hooker in the world last season, can find a place in today's starting line-up. The selectors wanted Ibanez as captain because he fitted snugly into their new-age philosophy and despite the howls of disbelief from all corners of the

٠.:			
	FRANCE V ENGLAND		
: S	at Stade de France	Bath	
2 F:	P Bernat Salles Pau 14 D Rees C Lamaison Brive 13 Guscott	Sale	
s	S Glas Bourgoin I2 W Greenwood C Dominici	_Leicester	

Toulouse 3 D Garforth

Leicester

Wasps, capt

Replacements: 16 M Perry (Bath); 17 P de Gianville (Bath); 18 A Diprose (Saracus); 19 D Grew-cock (Saracus); 20 G Rowstree (Lelossar); 21 P Vickery (Glouces-ter); 22 D West (Lelossar).

Kick-off: 2.0 (Sky Sports 2)

game in front of an 80,000

crowd wherever it might be, he

shouldn't be looking to perform

adrenalin buzz for those in-

volved. I know. I've played

games in Paris and I can recall

This game will be a pure

...Toulouse

Dax capt 2

Replacements: 16 X Garbajosa (Toulouse): 17 D Aucagne (Pau): 18 F Gaithie (Colomiers): 19 M Lievremont (State Français): 20 T

(Pau): 21 C Soulette Referee: DMd-lugh (Ireland)

This is a fresh side, an unfamiliar side and that makes them a problem," Woodward said. "It's the side I would have at international level. picked had I been in their shoes. But we're happy with the side we've picked and if an English rugby player can't relish a

I envy these players because I eye over the vast bowl of the wish I could still do what they're new stadium yesterday.

For the record, Woodward played at the old Parc des Princes on three occasions as an England centre, winning twice. "Sadly, it's the real thrashing we took in 1984 that I remember best of all," he said. "I don't want these guys to go through anything like that."

But it is Woodward himself who could most do without an explosion of French joie de vivre today. The coach is still comfortably in credit following the difficult but generally encouraging series of matches against New Zealand, South Africa and Australia before Christmas, but he knows better than anyone that he is now moving into more perilous waters. For the first time, the rugby public back home expects nothing less than a victory and as a re-

sult the heat is very much on. "I know England have gone six Tests without a win but I'm not thinking along those lines,"

what the atmosphere was like. he insisted as he ran a tutored

"I take my starting point from the last fixture - I've never been any different - and therefore, I'm looking at guys who drew 26-apiece with a great New Zealand team. The videos tell us that we didn't actually play as well as we thought that day, but it was still a big plus, a step along the road to where we want to go. This game is about taking another step."

As an ex-centre who prefers to leave the whys and wherefores of the scrum, ruck and maul to his specialist advisers. Woodward none the less appreciates that today's outcome rests squarely on the shoulders of his front row. It is not a vintage trio by any

manner of means: Jason Leonard is struggling to redisloose head, Mark Regan's rumbustious form around the padwith a double bass and Darren their ears.

Garforth remains an honest journeyman rather than a stateof-the-art Test tight head. Opposing them are Christian Califano and Frank Tournaire, two props of undisputed world

"It will be a hard old afternoon, that's for sure," said Regan yesterday as he paddled his way around a Versailles hotel swimming pool in an effort to soothe the effects of a week of shuddering work-outs at the business end of the scrummaging machine. "We can take 'em. though. I've got some good boys around me."

3 · * * * * *

Mmmm. The danger for England is that Califano and Tournaire will match the murderous physical battering dished out by Os de Randt and Adrian Garvey during the Springboks' record win at Twickenham in the autumn. If Regan and cover his old authority on the company fail to hold the twin terrors of Toulouse, England will go into their next match dock has been undermined by against Wales with the catchhis inability to hit a barn door phrase "win or bust" ringing in

Bleak days over for Bracken the born-again red rose international

It is more than four years since a cynical All Black flanker by the name of Jamie Joseph unwittingly made a sporting icon of Kyran Bracken with one sly stamp of his right boot.

Bracken slowly recovered from the physical effects of that assault but it has taken him until now to reestablish his credentials as the brightest England scrum-half of his generation who is making up for lost time.

his 15 minutes of fame within two minutes of the start of his England debut. As the Bristol law student spun out a trademark pass from the first line-out of the Twickenham international against New Zealand in November 1993, a snarling lump of south island nastiness picked his moment, selected his spot and, as soon as the referee turned his back, stamped hard on the newcomer's ankle, tearing the sinews and straining the ligaments to breaking point.

History records that Bracken not only played on - an unfeasible act in itself, given the severity of his injury - but summoned up one of the definitive scrum-half performances of recent memory, coaxing and cajoling a match-winning effort from a grizzled, seen-it and done-it pack to whom he had been introduced a mere 48 hours previously. Suddenly, the struggling. They didn't put presback pages were no longer at the races. Cuddly Kyran was supersexy front-page material, a heart-throb hero with attitude.

So what happened? Why are we not now discussing a 30cap England veteran, a Test Lion, a 24-carat celeb? It is a cautionary tale. A victim of his

series of gambles with his own fitness that would have made the quackiest of quack doctors blanch and as a result, he very nearly put the brightest of futures behind him. In short, he committed the deadliest rugby sin of them all. He played injured.

He played before his ankle was fully mended, he played with a serious back condition, he played with glandular fever. he played with groin trouble. Like Terry Holmes, the brilliant but ultimately unfulfilled Welsh scrum-half of the early 1980s, his courage frequently undermined his judgement. Only now, in the supremely professional environment of a resurgent Saracens, has he finally accepted the truism that discretion is the better part of valour.

game and there

Mondays when you can avoid the treatment table entirely and if you pulled out with every bump

"When I had glandular fever, I lost a stone in weight and played terribly. But I was at Bristol then and they were sure on me to play - I want to emphasise that point - but I felt honour bound to turn out, to do my bit. I thought I'd get through, that it would be all right. It wasn't all right, though.

It was bloody awful. sional game doesn't wear that own bravery. Bracken took a sort of nonsense. Preparation is

that even if you were desperate to play injured, you couldn't hope to pull the wool over sible and keep the lid on your frustration.

of authority.

niggles from time to time," he rowly missed points out. "Rugby is a hard old Lions selection and when he

finally made it

and bang, you'd never get on the another injury.

"But I've realised now that serious fitness problems need rest and treatment, not 80 minutes of physical purgatory. I was carrying a groin injury as recently as last season. It didn't stop me playing, but it definitely stopped me playing to the best of my ability. It's counterproductive. I know that now.

"Thankfully, the profes-

everyone's eyes, to fool all of the doctors and physics all of the time. I love playing rugby and I adore the rough and tumble of it all, but you have to be sen-

That particular emotion has claimed more than its pound of flesh from Bracken. He travelled to the 1995 World Cup as England's Grand Slam scrumhalf but, short of full fitness as usual, found himself marginalised by Dewi Morris and subsequently had to watch Matt Dawson, Andy Gomarsall and Austin Healey fill the national No 9 shirt with varying degrees

to South Africa ment for Rob Howley, he played half a game before picking up yet This season, though, he is

back in his pomp and operating at an all-embracing level beyond the grasp of any of his rivals (his cover tackles are in the Healey class, he works his pack as expertly as Dawson, he senses a gap as instinctively as Gomarsall and his pass, the basic tool of his trade, is the most accomplished of the four). His move to Saracens 18 months ago appears to have been the

making of him. "Bath got in touch with me as soon as it became obvious that I was no longer happy at Bristol, but I needed a change from the West Country scene. I can't say I have any regrets. Bristol was an intense situation in the sense that I felt their expectations of me were very high. Expectations are high at Sarries too, but we have so many

so thorough now, so detailed, positions that the atmosphere is more favourable.

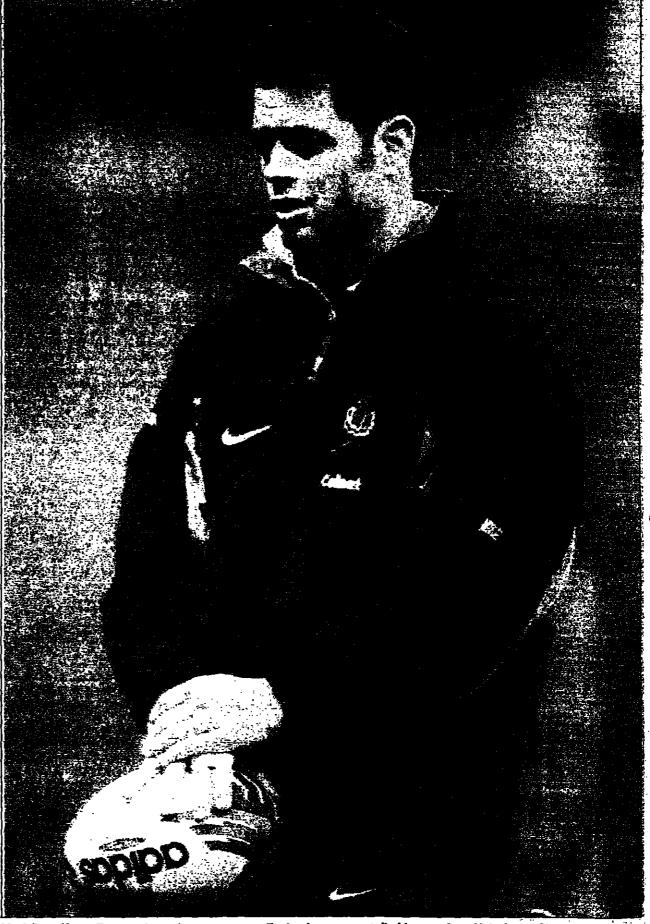
Working with François Pienaar has been a real eyeopener. He has the hardest, most purely competitive edge of any coach I've encountered; he wants us to play total rugby. and he believes the only way of accomplishing that is to be the fittest side in the Premiership. You don't mess about with him on any account. When I first joined, I thought I'd live in central London and commute to training. It wasn't enough, not by a long chalk. Now I live very close to our Southgate ground and base my entire lifestyle around my rugby."

Not that Bracken is a rugby bore, far from it. Indeed, he fears for the teenagers who put college and university on the -burner to try their luck out on with a professional club. "What will they have to fall back on if they fail to make it? Where does rugby leave a 23-year-old who has never done anything but chuck a ball around?" he asks.

"I soaked up a massive amount of experience during my time at Bristol University, where I played all sorts of rugby, fairly anonymous stuff with my mates as well as high-profile matches, and if all this ended tomorrow, I'd be able to go back to the law and pick up where I left off. Perhaps professionalism has made it more difficult for youngsters to enjoy a bit of variety in their lives. That saddens me, frankly."

Bracken will need to draw on a good deal of life experience just to survive the hostility certain to be generated by an 80,000-strong Parisian crowd this afternoon. "It's always fun, playing the French," he says. "The fact that you can't understand a word they're saying adds something to the frenzy of

The French will understand Bracken, that's for sure. One look at the expression on his face will tell them just bow much he is enjoying life as a bornquality players in important again international.



No 9 lives: Kyran Bracken is ready to resume an England career curtailed by a series of injuries Photograph: Peter Jay

Califano at the forefront of France's aggressive first line of defence



head prop, is ready to exorcise the spectre of a humiliating defeat as the Tricolores confront England today, he tells lan Borthwick in Paris.

France's admired tight-

Christian Califano,

Rugby has been good to Christian Califano. The Toulouse tight-head prop, who wins his 37th cap for France today, is one of the best-paid players in France, and although the sums of money here have not yet reached the ruinous amounts being dished out in England, the 25-year-old has come a long way from the housing estate in Toulon where he grew up.

Toulon, the macho naval dreams of centre stage

hotbeds of rugby in France, and ning four national champithe suburb of La Valette, like so many nameless, soulless masshousing developments which are the blight of French city life, is notorious for breeding hard men, and adolescents with a delinquent streak.

These days, Califano re-mains understandably discreet about his misspent youth, and prefers not to talk about the difficult years he spent growing up in La Valette with his mother and two sisters. "I am not ashamed of where I come from. But I alone know what I went through in my adolescent years. I prefer not to go over it again, but it is true that without rugby, things might have ended up badly for me.

A Grand Slam champion with France last year, he has also been on a high with his club town on the Mediterranean Stade Toulousain, which he shores, is known as one of the joined from Toulon in 1992, win-

onship titles in a row. Unanimously admired in France for his uncomplicated but genuine human warmth, he always has a moment for the beret-wearing pensioners who stop him in the streets of Tolouse, and in the recent school holidays, seeing a group of idle teenagers near his club grounds, he grabbed a football, went over to talk to them, and the next thing Califano and the youngsters were having a kickaround on a nearby pitch. "Rugby has changed my life, and in everything I do. I just try to give back to the

One of the ironies of his career is that he first won selection for France at the expense of his childhood friend, Marc de Rougemont. Born eight days apart in the same clinic in La Valette, "Cali" and "Rouge" seconds for the 100 metres is ended like a knife in the heart

game everything it has given

were inseparable in their youth, perhaps nothing exceptional, and when De Rougemont was a late withdrawal from the 1994 tour to New Zealand, it was Califano who took his place. Luck continued to be on Cal-

ifano's side, as he won his first cap on that tour - against the All Blacks in Christchurch - and has never looked back. Virtually an automatic choice in the French front row, Califano has developed into arguably one of the best front-row forwards in the world, capable of playing on either side of the scrum. His rotund, teddy-bear appearance belies a powerful frame capable of bench-pressing 160 kilos, but perhaps the most surprising aspect is his remarkable speed for a man of 109kg. At a recent French squad session Califano reeled off some sprint times which embarrassed a number of the threequarters. His 12.03

but 3.07sec over 20 metres and After the match Califano 6.49 over 50 put him among the fastest in the team. It is hardly surprising to learn, then, that his secret desire is to play centre threequarter, preferably alongside Thomas Castaignède. "I

tion of the tactician and the battering ram!" One of the few to have emerged with any credit from the disastrous two-Test series against the Springboks last November, this passionate and tireless competitor, was also one of the most deeply affected by the record-breaking 52-10 loss at the Parc des Princes, It was an occasion which was supposed to have been the Tricol-

ores' emotional farewell to the

famous Paris stadium, but it

just need to lose 10 kilos or so,

and we could form a brilliant

tandem: the perfect combina-

spoke and walked like a man in daze. According to close friends, it took him days to get over the shock, and while many people considered him to be the player of the year in France, he felt like a humbled schoolboy. "There were so many famous ex-internationals in the stands that day, and I wanted so much to be worthy of them," he confided. "Jerome Gallion was there: when I was a kid growing up in Toulon, he was my hero. But now I don't know if I can ever look him in the eyes

Today's game against England is a chance for Califano and his team-mates to erase that memory, and what he calls the shame and humiliation of the defeat. "We know that we have to respond to the new challenges

for this normally effervescent that England represents. We all saw how they performed against . New Zealand in the Twickenham game last December, and we are aware of the efforts we have to make to prevent them

from scoring," he says. The opening game of the Stade de France may be a little early for Califano to exercise his talents as a centre, and he is more likely to be concentrating on putting in extra tackles than in popping up outside Castaignède for a scintillating midfield break. "If we want to compete with the English we have to make sure our defence keeps them out. That is our priority for the game: an

The southern hemisphere teams have shown the way. It doesn't matter if you are a prop or a full-back, you're both expected to put in the same number of tackles in a match."

aggressive first line of defence.



CRICKET

England's overnight

bowlers yesterday.

Port of Spain.

batsmen managed to frustrate the West Indies

Tony Cozier reports from

A combinations of factors al-

lowed England to frustrate the

West Indies and build up a rea-

second morning of the second

Test. The first, and foremost,

nation of Nasser Hussain and

Angus Fraser. The second was

the ineffectiveness of the West

created so many problems on

the opening day. The third was

the asset sportsman value as

his badge of courage through-

out his vigil the previous day.

he has, in the last year or so.

matured into the high-quality

player he seemed destined to

become when he first toured the

West Indies in 1990, aged 21.

His patience and perseverance

were essential in shepherding

the lower order through on a

pitch, and against bowling, that

posed problems for even the

He was never fazed by

several blows to hands and

body and showed the kind of

faith in his less accomplished

partners that fill them with

confidence. As Gary Sobers

used to do at No 6 for the West

Indies he was not overprotec-

tive, allowing Andrew Caddick.

specialist batsmen.

Hussain had already earned

It has taken some time but

highly as any other, luck.

RUGBY UNION: FIVE NATIONS

Irish front line primed to scotch Scots' , revival hopes

Even before a ball has been kicked in anger, Ireland's meeting with Scotland in Dublin today is being billed as the battle of the underdogs.

David Liewellyn looks at two sides who may be locked in a desperate tussie to avoid the wooden spoon.

The record as they enter the arena is not good. Both teams are still licking wounded pride following embarrassing setbacks recently against the upstart paps of Italy. Ireland have won just two of their last 10 games, Scotland two out of 12, suffering two record defeats against tree and he growled: "People Australia and South Africa along the way.

The form book favours Scotland. The last time they lost to Ireland was in 1988 at Lansdowne Road. Since then it has been one-way traffic. Ireland, meanwhile, have not managed to put more than 15 points past the Scots since their 1991 World Cup game at Murrayfield.

However, Scotland's new head coach, Jim Telfer, who has taken over the reins following the recent departure of Richie Dixon and David Johnston, is being cautious, not building up expectations. They may travel as favourites, but Telfer is reluctant to accept the label and is urging patience.

"It's what happens at the end of the Five Nations that is important," he said. "I think people should judge this group of rather than this first one. I. cess on the Lions tour, has don't think it is a disaster if we looked a bit stale. But he epitlose. We have these four games to turn our season around. The championship is like four rounds of golf: you can still win and, with the type of game we tryeven if you don't have such a ing to play, it is very hard to stop

R Wellace...

K Maggs...

M McCall

D Hickie_

P Wallace

D Corkery __

E Miller____

P lobos ...

Slam and the Lions veteran believes that the key areas are in the back row and at half-back. The latter area sees Gary Armstrong, who takes over the captaincy from Rob Wainwright, picking up his 20-match partnership with outside-half Craig Chalmers.

In the most recent meeting between these two sides, at Murrayfield last year, Scotland recorded their biggest win and highest score (38-10) over the Irish. It was also their highest score in the championship.

the losers of this particular dog fight will almost certainly be left clutching the dreaded wooden spoon, the Ireland coach, Brian Ashton, thinks that could be a case of barking up the wrong who say that are being premature. I don't think any of the 30 players or either management team regards it in that light."

Keith Wood, the Ireland captain who was injured and consequently missed last season's Tartan humiliation, is confident that the trend of Scotland domination can be reversed. "We are sick of the Scots," he said, "It's about time we won. Last year there was an awful lot of faults, which happens from time to time. I don't think anything like that will happen this year.

"The preparation has gone really well, our back row will be pretty impressive. We've a decent pack and line-out and we will have a few tricks in our back line that could frighten them a bit."

One member of the back row is Eric Miller, who has had an indifferent season at No 8 for players after those four games. Leiceston and following his sucomises the mood of the upbeat Ireland camp.

"We're very strong up front It was Telfer who guided Clearly, the wooden spoon will Scotland to their 1984 Grand not be accepted without a fight.



Brian Ashton: 'Until we start enticing players back to Ireland we are going to struggle'

Photograph: Allsport

But while logic dictates that elosers of this particular data. Ashton's Ireland taking right direction

Brian Ashton, the Ireland coach, hopes his side will finally equal the sum of the parts and make a vital winning start against Scotland in the Five Nations' Championship in Dublin today.

lan Stafford talked to him about the massive job he took on.

One year ago Brian Ashton was hailed as the new saviour of Irish rugby, largely because of a brave but nevertheless heavy defeat at home to the French. It left the former Bath coach wondering just what had he let himself in for

"It was a real warning bell for me because I thought, if they're happy when they lose, we've got major problems," he said. Now, on the eve of this season's Five Nations' Championship, Ashton has a clearer, and not particularly encouraging idea.

We are the least professional Five Nations country, and I expected changes to be made which haven't been vet." he is quite happy to reveal. "Until we start enticing our players back to Ireland, which will the domestic game, we're going to struggle. That's why I have to depend on English-based players. I don't want to do this, but I don't have much choice."

Ashton's injury list has hard-

Wales entertain Italy at Stradey

Park tonight, the first time they

have played there since 1893,

but apart the desire to get into

shape for the start of their Five

Nations campaign against Eng-

land at Twickenham in a fort-

night, there is another more

personal reason why they will

field - against New Zealand in

November - they were led out by

the Cardiff flanker and although

they lost 42-7, showed enough to

suggest better days were ahead.

The last time they took the

want to win - Gwyn Jones.

ly helped matters. Short of world- so that we can claim a win. The losing habit and give the team a class players at the best of times, Ireland have lost the services of players as good as Jeremy David-

son, Simon Geoghegan, Jim Staples and Jonathan Bell. "We obviously don't have the strength in depth like the English, so we're bound to be hit harder by such losses. But the bigger problem has been Ireland's struggle to produce a professional game at home, which would keep the best players over here."

Incredibly, murmurs of discontent about Ashton's six-year contract have already began. Ireland finished bottom of the Five Nations table last year, lost heavily to New Zealand and by a closer margin, to Italy, before Christmas, and enter today's widely considered wooden spoon-decider against Scotland in Dublin with little to suggest their barren run will end.

Ashton takes all this on the chin. "It's difficult to argue against that case," he agreed. "I suppose it depends on both sides to prove the doubters wrong. We just need a little time. Don't forget, I was brought into the team a week before the first Five Nations game last season, and only began my official appointment last April, since when I've been in charge for three games.

fortunes, but it's obviously going to take some time. I'm well

A fortnight later, Jones,

trapped in a ruck during a club

game, suffered severe spinal in-

juries which have kept him in hos-

pital and threaten his chances

of walking again. He has already

given up hope of playing again.

has taken over the captaincy

from Jones, and he is backed up

by the exciting Arwel Thomas al-

lied to the more complete skills

of Scott Gibbs and Allan Bate-

man in the centre and Neil Jenk-

ins at full-back. Ieuan Evans

Scrum-half Robert Howley,

progress we are making is more nportant than that."

It is here that Ashton holds out hope. Last April he told me he aimed to coach Ireland back up to England's level, and therefore world level, by the year 2003, which would mark the end of his contract. One year on he still maintains this goal.

"It's still possible, but the Irish public and rugby supporters are going to need to show some faith here. At least we've all identified the type of rugby we want to play, which is the type I've always promoted and now seems to be the accepted approach by most countries. "I also expect us now to be

competitive for 80 minutes, instead of an hour we've played before. We have 12 English-based players in the side, so there shouldn't be any excuses there. "I think the hardest barrier to

clear is just the habit of losing. I'm not certain the players have the confidence to win matches, at least not in an Irish green jersey. It's amazing, really, to see them on the training pitch. "There they work as hard,

and look as good as any other team in the Five Nations. When used to winning matches, but as very careful. comes into it."

A win tomorrow could important aim, but I'm not go- think that's all it could take,"

Italy's entry into the Five Na-

tions' Championship may not be

for another two years, but they

have already beaten Ireland and

Scotland on home soil this sea-

son. An away win would prove

beyond doubt that the Italians,

who also beat France in Greno-

ble last year, a week after the

French claimed the Grand Slam.

Massimo Cuttitta, Italy's most ex-

Harlequins' loose-head prop,

are ready to join the élite.

great deal of confidence. It would mean that we could look forward to the rest of the Five Nations in the hope that we

could get at least one further win.

"But I'm not going out just to win. The way we play, in the longterm, is far more important, than kicking our way to victory for the sake of a result. That's been part of the problem in the past. A win at Twickenham would make everyone satisfied, regardless of whatever else happened in the Five Nations. Now, though, there's no way we'd get a win at Twickenham, not until the work's been put in. It's already started, and I'm hoping some of this might begin to

With this in mind the beleaguered Scots would seem to be the ideal opposition for Ashton's men. Their pre-Christmas programme was as disastrous as the Irish, and with internal ructions rife, they appear to be ripe

for further defeat. Ashton has two ways of looking at this, "That's certainly one accurate theory, but the other one is that they, under Jim Telfer and Ian McGeechan, will be fired up to the hilt to perform they play for their clubs they are against us, and we've got to be

pecting a dramatic change in Ireland the inhibition factor I know that I have a lot of talented players who have not done themselves justice yet, our ability, then I am pretty coning to revert back to type just Ashton said. "It would break that fident we'll get the right result."

the side after missing the Scot-

land game because of a rib injury.

land gainte because of a no injury.

WALES: N Jendes Portypridd; I Evers (Bath
A Beterman (Normond), S Gibbs (Swarsed, G
Thomas (Cardif); A Thomas (Swarsed, R
Howely (Cardif); Cardif, G
Lewellyn Hariequins), M Yoyle (Landif), G
Llewellyn Hariequins), M Yoyle (Landif), G
Appleyard (Swansed), S Cuttentil (Richmond), M
Williams (Portypridd), Replesements K Morgan (Portypridd), P John (Portypridd), N
Thomae (Betti), C Stephens (Bridgend), I
Mustee (Cardif), J M Humphreys (Cardif),
ITALY: C Pilet (Senation); P Vaccut (Cardison)

Misstoe (Cardiff, J M Hismphreys (Cerdiff), ITALY: C Plate (Benetich; P Heccarl (Cartisans), C Stoics (Narhonne), L Martin (Pachva), Maccallo Cutilità (Misri), D Domainguez (Stade Français), A Tronco (Benetich); Messimo Cutilità (Harisquins), C Orlandi (Misri), A Cestellani (Paquin), C Croci (Misri), V Cristofostito (Benetich), M Geovanelli (Narbonne, cast), A Sporton (Benetich), J Garchard (Narbonne, cast), A Sporton (Benetich), J Garchard (Benetich), Replateasentis: B Geovate (Benetich), A Somstella (Budin), S Sacco (Padoet), A Moresti (Padova), G de Carli (Roma),

on on the one ing day of the second unofficial Test here yesterday. The left-arm spinners claimed seven wickets revision to the original itineraware that results are the most change everything. "I really and if we can play to the best of between them as Sri Lanka A, who elected to bat after a 45minute delay because ground-

> Giles claimed 4 for 52 while Cosker grabbed 3 for 46 as the pair bowled virtually unchanged in tandem as Sri Lanka lost their last nine wickets for 101 runs.

> England made a disastrous start to their reply with the captain, Nick Knight, being trapped low by Ruchira Perera with the third ball of the innings but Steve James finished unbeaten on 23 while Darren Maddy continued his prolific form by reaching the close on 22.

from government officials following another fatal bomb blast in Colombo yesterday.

handle the situation like the Test cricketers they are. They responded with a high sense of responsibility.

Fraser was especially impressive. He took a fearful crack on the helmet to the first ball of the day from Kenny Benjamin but he never flinched throughout his vital resistance. It was the kind of spirit that promotes the entire team. It also deflates and upsets the opposition.

With just two wickets needed to complete their job, Curtly Ambrose and Benjamin would have been expected to resume firing on all cylinders as they had been less than 24 hours earlier, especially after Benjamin's direct first ball hit. Instead, they lacked their controlled menace of the first day as Hussain and Fraser became entrenched.

They would not have been the first attack to simply wait for the quick and inevitable end of the innings on such a capricious surface. By the time they realised it was not going to be that easy, Hussain and Fraser had got the hang of things and Brian Lara was ringing the changes.

They can justifiably claim they were not favoured by fortune, that half-inch here, quarter-inch there, was the difference between the ball clipping the edge and going past the bat. But there is a proven axiom in sport that the more you put in the luckier you get and the West Indies bowlers did not seem to be at full throttle. In addition, on such a pitch,

batsmen deserve more than there fair share of the luck Dean Headley and Fraser to that is going.

Sri Lanka collapse against **England's left-arm spinners**

Sri Lanka A 171 England A 47-1 Myles Hodgson reports from Matara

Dean Cosker and Ashley Giles bowled England A into a comstaff had over-watered the wicket, were dismissed for 171.

England A will take advice

The tour manager, Graham Gooch, is to discuse the situation with the British High Commission today after the Tamil Tigers terrorist group exploded a bomb in the country's capital which killed seven

It follows a previous attack Kandy on the famous Temple of the Tooth which resulted in 13 deaths and prompted a ary, cutting the tour short by 10

Sei I anke A won trees first day of four SRI LANKA A - First Innings *R P Arnold c Nash b Hutchison A Gunswardena c knight b Giles N Nawaz c and b Giles

A Juriad b Hutchison 1
Extras (Ib1, w1, rb2) 4
Iotal (72.3 overs) 177
Falt 1-43, 2-70, 3-81, 4-85, 5-97, 6-114, 7-85, 8-57, 9-162
Bowfing - Hutchison 73-3-25-2; Hollioake 6-1-29-1; Brown 7-2-18-0; Gäes 26-7-52-4; Coster 28-11-46-3

Fall: 1-1
To bat: M A Esham, D J G Seles, B C Hollo-alia, D R Brown, A F Gles, †D C Nash, D A Cosker, P M Hutchison. Bowling: Perera 3-0-15-1; Boteju 5-1-6-0; Bandarfilleke 5-1-8-0; Juniad 2-0-11-0; Arnold 1-0-4-0. Umpires: R N S Strasona and T H Wijew-

irony not lost on Leopards

Sheffield Sharks are one game away from the uni-ball League Trophy final at Birmingham's Leopards.

103-85 in the first leg of the semi at Ponds Forge on Wednesday night. Sheffield qualified from the north group for the quarter final draw as the fourth-placed team with the best record. But Mims said: "If we'd lost to Warford in our last group game, they would have got into the last eight instead of Sheffield."

to face London Towers, who beat Newcastle Eagles 102-84 in their first leg. But Mims has not given up hope for his side s second leg on Thursday. "We've already beaten Sheffield by 14 points in the league. Of course he had severed ties with his we can do it," he said.

– Richard Taylor :

RELAND V SCOTLAND

at Lansdowne Road

London Irish 15 R Shepherd ...

...Saracens 14 C Joiner

_Bostol I3 A Tait___

B O'Meara Cork Const 9 G Armstrong Newcastle, capt

R CorriganGreystones I G GrahamNewcastle

K Wood ___Harleguns, capt 2 G Bulloch, West of Scotland

K Dawson London Irish 7 S Holmes London Scottish

__Leicester 8 P Walton ____

__Saracens 4 D Cronin___

D Humphreys_London Insh 10 C Chairners.

M O'Kelly___London Irish 5 D Weir....

....St Mary's ! K Logan

London Irish 12 G Townsend Northampton

Saracens 3 M Stewart Northampton

____Bristol 6 R Wainwright __Dundee HSFP

Standbridge plays it smart

Paul Standbridge was continuing to play the smart game as Toshiba protected an 18-mile lead on the sixth day of the fifth leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race from New Zealand to Brazil yesterday.

Replacements: 16 T Stanger (Hawkit): 17 D Lee (London Scot-cish); 18 A Nicol (Bath); 19 A Rox-burgh (Kelso); 29 S Grimes (Wat-sonians); 21 D Hilton (Bath); 22 G Scott (Dundee HSFP). Kick-off: 3.0 (BBC1)

since leaving Auckland.

arated by only four miles. Meanwhile, Innovation Kvaerner, EF **Education and Brunel Sunergy** are all but becalmed at the rear. are all bull becaumed at the real-WHITEREAD ROUND THE WORLD RACE fifth leg, 8,270 miles, Auckland, NZ, to São Sebestião, Brai: 1 Toetiba (US) P Standardoe 5.383 miles to finish; 2 Swedish Match (Swe) G Krantz 18 miles behind leader, 3 EF Language (Swe) P Cayard 432, 4 Sik-Cut (GB), 1 Smith +325; 6 Chessele Racing (US) D Smith +325; 6 Merit Cup (Manaco) G Datton +325; 7 Innovation Kreemer (Nor) K Frostad 153.3; 8 EF Education (Sw) C Guillou +136; 9 Brunel Sunergy (Neth) R Heiner + 187.

Behind Standbridge is Gun-

and then come four boats sep-

- Stuart Alexander, Auckland

Don King has promised to revealed that he had taken constand by the former world champion, Mike Tyson, through what he describes as "a frus-

boxing after biting a piece out of Evander Holyfield's ear in their world title bout last June, asserted earlier this week that long-time promoter King. The American heavyweight

"I've worked with Mike Tyson career. I know he is going through a frustrating period at the moment but I will stand beside him and be there for him. I love Mike Tyson and he knows

RUGBY LEAGUE

Crooks goes up to Oxford

returns to the right wing for his perienced player with 57 caps, is

Wales looking for a very personal victory at Stradey Park

for Wales.

given the chance to revive his coaching career with the ambitious Oxford Cavaliers.

coaching staff. Oxford, of the southern-

ence, have had talks with Crooks, whose vast experience they see steering them towards professional status. The Cavaliers are joining forces with the Oxford Harle-

major stadium development that will also strengthen their eventual case for Rugby League membership. Halifax are not, after all, to bid farewell to their home for 112 years this weekend. Thrum Hall

stay of execution. week, tomorrow's game has

The former Great Britain for- been called off. Any home ties ward, Lee Crooks, has been in the Cup will continue to be played at Thrum Hall with a final commemorative game to travel to Cannock to play strugbe staged after that. Halifax will move in with Halifax Town at The Shav in time for the Super sumes after the winter break.

> news that their hooker, Paul weekend's Tests against Aus-Rowley, who was thought to tralia with damaged ribs while have broken his hand, will be fit. Slough have Karen Brown

this season.

team play off at the end of the last night. campaign, but Whitehaven and Featherstone, who meet to- was facing Nigel Bond, an opmorrow, look at least as strong. ponent he had defeated in 12 of Swinton Lions' former

been drawn together in the Sheals, announced his retire-Silk Cut Challenge Cup next ment yesterday at the age of 31. favourite to win the £145,000

HOCKEY

72nd cap, looking for his 34th try fit enough to resume his place in

Sixsmith blow for Sutton

tional outdoor title to the indoor talent, can cope without Brown, crown they won last weekend, the loss of Sixsmith to Sutton gling Sutton Coldfield as the Women's National League re-

Both teams have injury con-The club has been given a cerns. Sutton could be without Keighley, who along with doubtful with a hamstring injury

will be a major blow. Third-placed Olton Ter-

who expect to have their four internationals back, at Chelms- after just four seconds. ford would surely put the latter out of contention for the title.

their 15 career meetings.

Yet, while the bookmakers had Hendry as a short-priced - Dave Hadfield first prize, the man himself was champion Steve Davis.

The Cougars have been breezed untroubled into the a tremendous player and I'll defconfidence isn't 100 per cent be-Won a tournament."

JUDO Howey just Slough, favourites to add the na- Slough, with their vast array of misses medal

Do not shake the hand of the world judo champion, Kate Howey. That is certainly the raquest play host to Clifton, in conclusion drawn by her French second, and defeat for the Mid- opponent in the opening round landers would make their at the Tournoi de Paris yesterchances of overhauling the vis- : day. For in the initial exchange, itors slim. A win for Leicester, : Isabelle Beauruelle dislocated a finger and had to withdraw -And there is no doubt that

the 24-year-old world title holder from Andover is a formidable opponent even if, in this first international of the year, she failed to win a medal. In the second round, Joong-

Suk Lim of South Korea simply could not believe it when Howey scooped her off the ground to throw her for two scores with morote-gari, her famous rugby-tackle throw.

But the new weight of 70 cause it's been so long since I've kilos for the middleweight - up from 66kg - has attracted light-Hendry's cause was aided on heavyweights, including Ylena Thursday when Ronnie O'Sul- Scapin of Italy. She caught livan, who has proved a thorn in Howey with an opportunist, his side on numerous occasions, then used her larger bulk to hold

Reptiscements: 16 S McDowell (Balymera): 17 E Elwood (Galvegtars): 18 S McFeor (Garryowen): 19 N Pooplewell (Newcaste): 20 R Nesdale (Newcaste): 21 G Fulcher (London Irish): 22 V Costello (St Marys). Referee: A Watson (South Africa)

BASKETBALL

NEC on 8 March, yet Chris Finch's team would not even have reached the last eight had , it not been for their semi-final opponents, Greater London The irony was not lost on Leopards' coach, Billy Minns, after Sheffield routed them

Sheffield are now favourites

SAILING

_Newcastle

.....Newcastle

nar Krantz in Swedish Match

The American and his navigator Andrew Cape have twice made the moves which have given Toshiba the advantage as the nine-boat fleet worked hard to make the best of light winds

King declares 'love' for Tyson

"He's always been in control of his own affairs," King said. trating period." Tyson, who was banned from

trol of his own affairs and hired new attorneys and accountants.

and he has controlled his own a friendly against Huddersfield, tomorrow, but has been given a

Crooks retired as a player last season and has been out of the game since the end of his temporary role on Castleford's

based Rugby League Confer-

quins rugby union club in a was due to stage its last match,

Because the two clubs have

League season. boost for the game with the Jane Sixsmith, who missed last

other First Division teams start sustained in the first Test. While their marathon 30-match season tomorrow, have dropped their High Court action against the SNOOKER Rugby League after being told allocation of Murdoch money

Welsh international prop, Mark

that they will receive their full Hendry in cautious mood Stephen Hendry should have not entirely optimistic, "Nigel's

made favourites for the title, semi-finals of the Benson and initely have to improve to get the which will be decided by a five- Hedges Masters at Wembley better of him," Hendry said. "My The 29-year-old World No 1

was beaten 6-3 by the defending off the English fighter.

- Philip Nicksan

fusal to turn out for the England B team, his manager at Blackburn Rovers, Roy Hodgson, land coach, Glenn Hoddle, is ignoring his players.

Hodgson is upset about the Sutton incident, and also the omission of Tim Sherwood and Stuart Ripley. "It was a sad day for Blackburn Rovers when the teams were selected," Hodgson said, "Speaking as their boss, all to merit a look-in.

"I don't think we can do anymore than we have done. We have never been outside the top three and those players have 40-odd players.

Following Chris Sutton's re- been rated by others as men of

"It's a pity when teams in the it is a matter of opinion. Hodlower reaches, who have not feahas complained that the Eng-tured much in anybody's ciently good enough for him." thoughts, are selected while ours are passed over. I am very disappointed for the players Hoddle after the striker spoke and also for ourselves that our good work has gone unnoticed.

They all wanted to play for England and go on to appear in the World Cup finals. They are three players have done enough ambitious. It goes without say- tute in the first international of ing that they are extremely sad and disappointed. But like myself they realise it is one man's opinion and he has named his

Bobby Williamson, the Kil-

marnock manager, has warned

stay among the challengers at

The Rugby Park side

demonstrated a fear of heights

when they lost fourth place af-

ter slipping to a 3-2 defeat at

marnock have the chance to re-

ping], but I would stress the

word immediate as we know

tight that you can soon find your-

has agreed a deal which will

2000 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSKIP: Scotland's qualifying fodures (verues to be arnouced): 5 September 1998 Lithuaria (h); 10 October Estoria (h); 14 October Faroe Islands (h); 27 March 1989 Bosnia-Herzegovira (h); 31 March Casch Republic (h); 5 June Faroe Islands (a); 9 June Casch Republic (a); 4 September Bosnia-Herzegovira (a); 8 September Estoria (a); 9 October Lithuania (h).

"We realise this division is so

we must avoid complacency,

тотепцт.

Scotland enjoy home advantage

The Tartan Army will not need to dig out their passports until the qualifying stages of the his side they must not lose 2000 European Championships their composure if they want to are well under way after Scotland were handed four of their the top of the Premier Division. opening five group games at

"There was some tough negotiation but, at the end of the day, we are happy with the way Dunfermline last week. Kilthe fixtures turned out," Jim Farry, the Scottish Football Association chief executive, said after a Uefa meeting in Prague yesterday.

"There is a slightly unusual pattern to the fixtures - partly because of the climate problems any immediate danger [of slip-~ with four home matches followed by four aways. But Craig Brown [the Scotland manager] is very pleased to have the run he said. of four homes near the start of the group."

The Scottish forward Scott Booth has been sent on loan by all we are trying to cement our Borussia Dortmund to the Dutch club Utrecht until the end of the season. Since arriving at the European champions Paul Sturrock, who is deter-Booth has made only rare ap- reject Hibernian's advances, pearances as a substitute, placing his position in the Scotland keep him at McDiarmid Park

World Cup squad in doubt. "I always want to play and I want to go to the World Cup. That's the only reason I'm leaving Dortmund," said the 26year-old Booth, who is likely to be in Utrecht's line-up today against Feyenoord.

the match along the way.

The lads are all dejected.

where Sherwood and Ripley Arsene Wenger, the Arsenal manager, has withdrawn defender Martin Keown from the England squad to play Chile at

"I have been a national man-

er with Switzerland and know

Hodgson feels Sutton's in-

dle's is that they're not suffi-

ternational career is over under

to the England manager, but

there may yet be time for the

others. Sherwood has been out-

standing this season in a more

attacking midfield role, while

Ripley was an England substi-

the door is shut on Sutton. Hoddle has made it clear he

won't be considered again, but

we have no information on

Hodgson said: "We believe

the season.

Wembley on Wednesday. Keown suffered a hamsuring injury against Coventry on 13 December which has failed to

respond to treatment. Although the centre-back is still hopeful of returning to Arsenal's side to play Crystal Palace in the FA Cup next weekend, Wenger telephoned Hoddle at lunchtime yesterday to tell him that Keown would have to miss the friendly international.

claim fourth position when they Tottenham Hotspur have meet St Johnstone at home tofailed in their bid to have midday - with Williamson warning fielder Stephen Clemence's Paul Merson, the Middles- chairman, Martin Gregory. Sup- to play in the World Cup, not for his players how easy it is to lose controversial FA Cup dismissal wiped out. "I would say we are not in

Clemence was sent off during Spurs' 3-1 fourth-round replay defeat at Barnsley on Wednesday night, after the referee Gerald Ashby issued a second yellow card for a dive in the opposition penalty area.

Spurs disputed the decision self back in trouble, and above and yesterday appealed against place. Our main aim remains it to the Football Association, getting away from relegation." but they have turned it down. The St Johnstone manager.

Work started yesterday on the "operations ce last summer from Aberdeen. mined to prove he was right to erpool's new £13m Soccer Academy. The site in Kirkby will be opened in October and the main building will take 42 weeks to complete.

Howard Wilkinson, the FA technical director, attended a a ticker-tape welcome for US ceremony to mark the official first day of building, along with new England squad member Michael Owen.



Arsène Wenger leads his Arsenal players in training yesterday

Merson 'doubtful' for B game

brough striker, is a fitness doubt for the England B internation-West Bromwich Albion.

Merson, who was named Nationwide Player of the Month yesterday, suffered an ankle iniury in the 3-0 midweek win over Tranmere and faces a fitness test before today's match at Birmingham. Nigel Pearson is also doubtful, but Gianluca Festa re-

turns after a two-match ban. Birmingham's new flm stand-by to make his debut and Alan Ball, the manager, criti-Martin O'Connor and Simon cising Paul Hall and Fitzroy Charlton hope to return after injury. Steve Robinson starts a Portsmouth's season in their flu. David Hillier is fit again, but two-match suspension.

Portsmouth fans are planning property tycoon Vince Wolanin when he attends today's home game against Nottingham Formatazz extravaganza" with 4,000 "Wolanin's here today - wave the flag and let's make him stay".

Talks between Wolanin and Gregory fell through last week after the chairman insisted on receiving more than the £2m that the American and his business partner, Brian Howe, were til 28 February. reported to be offering.

Simpson for missing a third of with Jamaica.

Ball is furious that the Britisharound £250,000 per year by their club, are missing so many matchest before continuing takeover es through their Jamaican com- Oxford with an ankle injury and negotiations with the club's mitments. "We are paying them will face a late fitness test.

porters have promised a "razz- us. Portsmouth isn't the important thing in their lives any al against Chile on Tuesday at cards being printed with the more." Ball said. "All we are con-Stars and Stripes and the slogan centrating on here is this club beating relegation - but we've got two players who are away playing for places in the World Cup."

Hall and Simpson are now taking part in the Gold Cup competition in America and may not be back in England un-

John Aloisi and Mathias There is also friction in the Svensson could be recalled Claridge, while goalkeeper Aaron Flahavan is on standby to replace Alan Knight, who has quest for international success Andy Thomson is suspended while Andy Turner is injured.

Dave Bassett, the Forest born pair, who are each paid manager, is waiting on the fitness of Scot Gemmill, who missed last week's 3-1 defeat by

SIDELINES

Wembley factor flavours derby

The fixture computer which paired Manchester United with Bolton Wanderers in the week of the 40th anniversary of the Munich



Afric passi in Ou

disaster was clearly programmed for poignancy. The clubs are forever linked by the FA Cup final three months after the crash, but despite their close proximity, dealings between them-have been scarce.

That was not always the case. James Cassidy, who in 1890 set the Bolton record of five goals in a match, was transferred to Newton Heath, the railway workers' team who were the forerunners of United. James McClelland, an FA Cup winner with Wanderers in 1929, went to Old Trafford as he wound down his career at 34, a move that would be inconceivable

Eric Bell joined United after national service in 1950, only to sign for Bolton inside a month. He scored the first of only two career goals in the "Matthews final" three years later. Around the same time, Matt Busby brought Harold McShane from Burnden Park for £5,000 plus John Ball. The father of the actor Ian McShane, he went on to win a championship

Tony Dunne, a full-back in Busby's European Cup-winning side, became part of a classy Bolton team built by Ian Greaves, himself one of United's Wembley losers in 1958. Willie Morgan won Second Division titles with both clubs, while Alan Gowling, Peter Barnes, Wyn Davies and Barry Fry (the very same; a post-Munich Red who did not make it) also had a dual connection, with Peter Beardsley providing the "ex" factor in today's derby.

> Ten things that Boro's Bolivian laime Moreno might be missing today



I La Paz, four kilometres takes place in early Febabove sea level, the highest capital city in the world. 2 Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable body of water in the world.

guably the highest in the cocaine than any country La Paz, which sells spells except Colombia. 4 Wages that can double

in minutes. But inflation olate and impenetrable, has reached 35,000 per cent in the past.

ruary in Copacabana, on the banks of Titicaca. 6 Chicha – maize liquor. 7 Andean music - as

baunting and mournful 3 Bolivian farmers, ar- as Middlesbrough cries when Newcastle win. world, as they export more 8 The Witches' Market in and potions -

- 9 The Chaco plain. Desmuch like the north east. 10 Coveted territory. Bode Candelaria, which putes with its neighbours.

NAME OF THE GAME No 21: PLYMOUTH ARGYLE

Contrary to widespread belief, the club was not named after the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who beat the Plymouth-based South Staffordshire Regiment to win the inaugural Army Challenge Cup in 1889. Three years earlier a group of public school leavers who wanted to continue playing football had met at the Borough Arms Coffee Tavern in Plymouth. They called themselves the Argyle Football Club after Argyle Terrace, a street in the Mutley area of the city where most of them lived. When they turned professional in 1903 the club became Plymouth Argyle.

On 6 February 1991. Wembley when they faced England in a friendly.

The build-up to the game had been metaphorically the money and did not play.

temperature was measured porters were eventually player who played that night. warmed by events on the pitch. The Crystal Palace assured international debut. and his senior partner, Gary the 2-0 win.

Cameroon became the first iffth time next week hoping African team to play at to avoid a third consecutive goalless draw against the South Americans. The two countries last

chilly due to Cameroon's Rous Cup, an end-of-season Roger Milla demanding a tournament which also fea-£50,000 appearance fee from tured Scotland. John the FA. He did not receive Fashanu and Nigel Clough made their England debuts The match itself took in a disappointing game in place on a night when the front of only 15,628 fans at Wembley. Paul Gascoigne is at - 4C, but England sup- the only current England

Santiago in 1984, also endstriker, Ian Wright, made an ed 0-0. In 1950 England won 2-0 in a World Cup match in Rio and three years Lineker, scored both goals in later they won 2-1 in a

THIS WEEK'S TRANSFERS

Loans/Trials

Gary Speed (midfielder) Everton to Newcastie (SSSm); John Beresford (defender) Newcastie to Southampton (CISm); Stephen Glass (midfielder) Aberdeen to Newcastie (pre-contract agreement); Theo Zagoraids (defender) PROK Salonike (Gr) to Leisssian (CTSQDOO); Dele Adebola (forward) Crowe Alexandra to Ermingham City (Crm); Rory Delap (midfielder) Carlisle United to Deroky County; Nigel Jemson (forward) Oxford United to Bury; Jehad Muntasser (forward) Arsenal to Bristol City; Alex Smith (defender) Swindon Town to Huddersfield Town

Michael Thomas (midfielder) Liverpool to Middlesbrough; Steven Basham (forward) Southampton to Wrexham; Paul Conner (forward) Middlesbrough to Hartlepool United; Leurens fen Heurel (forward) Barnsley to Northampton Town; William furley (goakseper) Northampton Town to Leyton Orient; Mark Watton (goakseper) Fulham to Gäingham; Julian Watts

Watts (defender) Leicester City to Hud-dersfield Town; Anthony Williams (goskeeper) Blackburn Rovers to Queens Park Rangers; Craig Smith (midfielder) Derby County to Rushden & Diamonds

Free transfers or undisclosed fees unless stated

Contributors: Phil Shaw, Nick Harris, Paul Newman Readers' contributions welcome. Send to Sidelines. Sports Deak, The Independent, 1 Canada Squere, Canary Whart, London F14 5DL e-mail address: sport @ Independent.co.uk

SPORTING DIGEST

TENNIS

Rusedski dismisses Damm

Greg Rusedski marched into the Swiss Olympic champion who is semi-finals of the Croatian In- ranked 30th. door Tournament in Split yesterday with a straight-sets win service twice in the first set, in

triumphed 6-1, 6-4 in 55 minutes, dropping only seven points in nine service games, five of which were double-faults. He served 15 aces, making a total of 50 in his world, had no answer.

tests. On his present form there he meets Marc Rosset, the 1992 year.

Rusedski, broke Damm's

over the Czech, Martin Damm. the second and sixth games, and The top-seeded British No 1 once in the second, in the third game. Damm's normally reliable first serve faltered in the opening set, allowing Rusedski to dominate. The 25-year-old Czech served better in the secthree matches this week, to ond set, but lost his service which Damm, ranked 64 in the long before Rusedski signed off with a 15th ace.

The two men had met four Steffi Graf is due to play in times in the past, with Ruseds- the Open Gaz De France event ki winning three of those con- in Paris next week, the former Wimbledon champion's first seems little to stop his progress, tournament since knee surgery but he will face stiffer opposi- after losing in the quarter-finals tion in the last four today, when of the French Open in June last

GOLF

Olazabal eases into the lead

The former US Masters cham- Canadian Rick Gibson after pion Jose Maria Olazabal eased into a one-stroke lead at the half-way stage of the Greg Norman International in Sydney yesterday as the host became

distracted by distant events. Ryder Cup hero Olazabal and the former White House infired a second consecutive fiveunder-par round of 67 to lead the American John Cook, who equalled the tournament best of 66 on another day of low scores. Olazabal collected two birdies on the front nine and three

more on the back. The Australian Craig Jones is two strokes behind the Spaniard on 136 after matching shots off the lead alongside rounds of 75 and 74.

both carded 69 yesterday. Greg Norman had a oneover-par 73, seven off the lead, clearly distracted by questions about the American president, Bill Clinton, a personal friend,

tern Monica Lewinsky. Raymond Russell is the leading British player five shots behind Olazabal on 139, while Andrew Coltart is on 140 hav-

ing matched his fellow Scot's 70. David Carter made it to the weekend on 143 after adding a 69 to his opening 74, but his fellow Englishman Jon Robson failed to qualify after a second Olazabal's 67, with Zimbabwe's successive 73. Scotland's Colin Nick Price tied for fourth three Campbell also bowed out after

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

People have questioned whether Bath still has any guts. Now they know. Tony Swift, Bath chief executive, after the last-gasp victory over Brive in the European Cup final.

 Tyson is mentally and physically broken, and King is responsible for that ... King lacks integrity and any semblance of honesty. He's been ripping off Mike for the last nine years. Bill Cayton, Mike Tyson's former manager, on the boxer's dispute with Don King. This was the worst display of refereeing five ever seen in my life - and I've played parks football. know i will get hammered by the FA for that, but that's how bad it was. Les Ferdinand on Gerald Ashby, al-

ter Spurs were knocked out

of the FA Cup by Bamsley.

TODAY'S NUMBER

The number of miles per hour at which baseball pitching machines hurl the ball. Nagano police have ordered school caretakers to lock up machines during the Olympic Games in case they are used by terrorists.

Basketball NBA: Toronto 101 Dales 93; Charlotte 108 Van-couver 93; Atlanta 108 Cleveland 94; Detroit 104 Houston 92; New Jessey 108 Phoener 94; Criando 93 Weshington 83; Miarrii 91 Mil-waufee 87

Cherro sa resimigan co. marin el minestre se resulte si rerollegue Second phase: Group F. PACK Salorika (Gr) St CSKA Moscow S8: Estudiantes (Sp) 68 Real Madrid 65; Benetton Treviso (fi) 96 Limoges (Fr) 70. Group E:
Maccabi Rei Anv 87 Turk, Reiccom 75 Group G:
Barcelone 94 Olimpia Liudjane (Stoven)
65; Pau-Crittez (Fr) 94 Alba Berlin 75; Kinder
Bologna (h) 69 Paris St-Germain 92. Group
H: Obora Zagreb (Croa) 84 Partizan Belgrade
(Yus) 66.

The Women's Cricket Association is having discussions with the England and Wales Cricket Board about merging with its male counterpart next month.

2-0.
TOUR MATCH (East London, SA; first day of four): Pakistan 232; Border 141 for 3.
SHEFFELD SHELD (Foundary matchesne): Melbourne (final day): Victoria 391 for nine declared and 247 for 9 dec (D M Jones 70); Wesjern Australia 327 for 7 dec (B P Julean 21mo) and 229 (J M Devison 5-84). Victoria won by 82 runs. Brisbene (third day): Cusensiand 238 and 154 (S N Young 5-64 B N Wonsy 5-37); South Australia 218 (J Janes 4-48) and 173 for 8, South Australia won by four wickers. Sydney (third day): Isamsing 202 and 347 (R J Tucker 99; D A Freedman 7-108; New South Wales 200 (M A Taylor 68; D J Marsh 7-57) and 67 for 1.

Football

FOOTball
THURSDAY'S LATE RESULTS: Conceed Gold Cup (Misma, Play: Brazil (Floragric pen 79) 1 Gustamala 1 (Plata 90). Informatic pen 79) 1 Gustamala 1 (Plata 90). Informational flourissianal (Lingassian): Cyprus 1 (Ofsica 70). Friend 1 (Johansson 30): Soveria 3 (Zatovic 22, 63. Bosis 69) isolared 2 (Ratosson 37, Gustamatonal Friendly (Mismakeath; Akorocco 3 (Basir 5); Shor 28. Barila pen 58) Niger 0. Dutich Lasgue; Forbura Situad 2 (Jaffrey 10; Hamming 21). Sparts Rotterdard 1 (Jaffrey 10; Hamming 21). Sparts Rotterdard 1 (Jaffrey 10; Hamming 21). Sparts Rotterdard 2 (Linda (Linda 10); Shorting Carpy Sparts Forbura (Linda 10); Shorting 2 Linda (Linda 10); Shorting 2 Mismortow, Pentitins Lasgue Second Oftward Durdalle (Linda 10); Shorting Langue Second Oftward Durdalle (Linda 10); Shorting Four; Stoka 3 Bury 0. Group Shor Transmera 3 Siscispool 4

Golf
GREC NORMAN INTERNATIONAL (Sydney) Leading second-round scores: 134
J M Olazabal (Sp) 67 57: 135 J Cock (US)
89 66: 136 C Jones (Aus) 69 67: 137 N Price
(Zmi) 68 89; A Gibson (Can) 88 89: 138 J
Senden (Aus) 72 65; G Coles (Aus) 70 68;
P Gow (Aus) 89 69; A Painter (Aus) 70 68;
139 W Smith (Aus) 72 67; D Dunsley (US)
70 69; P Lonard (Aus) 69 71; R Russel (GS)
(97 7) J Cooper (Aus) 65 73; 140 A Coltant
(GB) 70 70; S Elongton (Aus) 77; S Thompson (NZ) 68 72; N Keny (Aus) 77; S
Thompson (NZ) 68 72; N Keny (Aus) 69 71; P Sonor (Aus) 69 71; S Layeock (Us) 69
71; T Carolan (Aus) 69 71; 141 G Norman
(Aus) 69 73; S Appleby (Aus) 69 72; A Bon-homme (Aus) 72 69; M Coggin (Aus) 77; M
Ecob (Aus) 73 68; S Scatali (NZ) 72 69;

C Spence (Aus) 72 69; N O'Heam (Aus) 68 73; C Rymer (US) 70 71 BUCK INVITATIONAL (San Diego, Calif) Leading first mand across (US unless stat-

BURCK INVITATIONAL (San Diego, Calif) Leading first round scores (US unities stat-ed): §2 D Love. 63 F Zoeller, B Tway, S Jur-gersen, J Sanday 65 T Mas, S Crist, B Waddas, D Martin, C Perry, R Ediss, 65 B Estes, P Stew-art, L Clements, P Azinger, T Dodds; (§4), 67 S Pate, N Lancasier, R Cochran, G Twings, T Armour, B Golberger, J Kelly, P Goydos, J Suman, D A Welbring, Selected: 68 S Lyle (68), 77 T Woods, D Barr (Can), 72 J Parnevik (Swe). ice hockey

NHL: St Louis 3 Boston 1; Ottawa 3 Toronto 2: Detroit 5 Tampa Bay 4; Celigary 4 San Jose 2: Colorado 4 Cirticago 2; Philedelphia 6 Phoentx 2; Los Angeles 3 NY Rampers 1. THURSDAY'S LATE RESULTS: Express Copt. Nevcessite 3 Manchester 3 (ot): Beeingstoke 3 Nottingham 9; Cardiff 1 Bracknell 6.

Rallying NEDISH RALLY (Kerlsted) Leading po-SWEDISH RALLY (Karlstad) Leading po-sitions on first log (after four of eight stages); 1 7 Radshorn (Swe) Toyots 44-ran 12-sec; 2 T Maishen (Fin) Mitsubish 44-256; 3 C Sahtz (Sp) Toyots 44-522; 4 M Gronholm (Swe) Toyots 44-550; 5 C Michae (GB) Sub-aru 44-598; 6 J Kanidounen (Fin) Find 45-554; 7 D Auriol (Fi) Toyots 45-083; 8 K Entisson (Swe) Subaru 45-160; 9 M Jonsson (Swe) Find 45-219; 10 U Nittel (Ger) Mitsubish 45-398.

Rugby Union
Ronan O'Gera, the stand-off, Ronan
O'Gera yesterday kicked five penalties and a drop goal to help ireland
Under-21 at Confart, Dublin,
maintaining his skids unbeaten record
against them. Scotland went in front
after only 10 minutes when the full-back
Shart Moffat joined the line and went
over for a wed-worked try, converted
by the stand-off Gordon Ross, and
they maintained their lead until a
minute before half-time when Ireland
struck decisively. The Wesonians
centre Jamie Mayer was penalised for
a deliberate knock-on and the Garryowen scrum-helf Thomas Tierney
out through for a try after a repidly taken tap. Ireland established a stranglehold in the second half and, as the
visitors failed increasingly to cope with
a swirling wind, O'Gera stretched their
lead with a succession of penalities.
UNDER-21 INTERNATIONAL (Clortant,
Dublin; Iveland 23 Scotland 7.

Dave Sims, the England A lock, hes Rugby Union

Dutain): tream 22 Scotland 7.
Dave Sims, the England A lock, has been ruled out for at least three weeks with a shoulder injury. He will miss Gloucester's next two Allied Dunbar Premiership matches against Bath on 11 February and Northampton three days later.

Mittel Glowne prosident of South

ban on the days later.

Miuleki George, president of South Africa's National Sports Council, which governs sport in the country, has warned that he may resort to calling for international boycotts unless provincial rugby union teams increase their number of black players. George raised his concern about the racial composition of the teams when only four blacks were among the 120 South African players named last week to contest the forthcoming Super 12 tournament.

Sailing

Sailing
Peter Girnour, the world No. 1, was yesterday unexpectedly beaten by the 30th-ranked Frenchman Sebastien Destremau in the semi-finals of the Australia Cup in Perth. Girnour, who was sailing for Australia but representing Japan's Nippon Americas Cup challenge and sailing with an allapanese crew, had been the top scorer after the elimination rounds and had the choice of opponent in the semi-final. In tomorrow's final Destremau will meet the 66th-ranked Dean Barker of New Zealand. Barker also caused an upset by beating the also caused an upset by beating the Swede Magnus Holmberg, who is ranked 14th.

Snooker BENSON AND HEDGES MASTERS (Wembley Conference Centre) Cuarter-finals: M Williams (Wal) bt A Hamilton (Engl 6-3; S Clavis (Engl bt R O'Sulivan (Engl 6-3.

Table tennis

SUPPOPEAN MEN'S LEAGUE First Division (Great Yermouth) England 1 Greace 4 (Engnames first): Singless C Prean bt 1 Kondoutis 19-21 2-1 2-15, M Syed lost to K Knearge 7-21 11-21; T Young lost to N Bioleas 21-14 13-21 7-21; Prean lost to Kreange 7-21 18-21 Doubless Prean and Young lost to Bioleas and P Gloris 19-21 17-21.

CROATIAN BIDOOR ATP TOURINAMENT (Solit) Singles, quarter-finale: G Rusede-ld (GB) bt M Darmt (Cz Rep) 6-1 6-4; M Ros-ser (Swit) bt R Schuttler (Ger) 6-2 6-2; G lvanisavic (Cros) bt J Novak (Cz Rep) 7-6 7-8. 7-4.

MARSEILLE MEN'S OPEN Singles, quarter-finals: Y Katelrifox (Rus) bt A Clament (R) 9-2 3-6 5-4: M Tilistrom (Swe) bt A Bostack (R) 4-6 5-7-6.

TORAY PAN PACIFIC WOMEN'S OPEN (Volum) Stordes, quarter-finaler M Librois

Bossch (F) 4-6 6-0 7-6.
TORAY PAN PACIFIC WOMEN'S OPEN (Tokyo) Singles, quarter-finals: M Hings (Swip) Striges, quarter-finals: M Hings (Swip) bt R Grande (f) 6-2 7-5; L Devenport (US) bt i Sprieze, (Rom) 7-6 7-6; A Costzer (SA) bt A Sughama (Japan) 8-3 2-6 6-2; I Majoi (Croo) bt M Saseki (Japan) 8-3 2-6 6-2; I Majoi (Croo) bt M Saseki (Japan) 8-2 8-6; Majoi (Croo) bt M Saseki (Japan) 6-2 6-1.

ATP CHALLENGER (Lippatedt, Ger) Singles, quarter-final (selected): M Martell (t) bt A Richardson (EB) 7-6 4-6 6-3.

NATIONAL VEITERANS INDOOR CHAMP-(ONSHIPS) (Heston, Middat), Sami-firmats: Mem's singles over-45: R Dryaddie (Essay) bt J Paisn (Surey) 3-6 8-3 6-2 Over-45: J Biann (Surey) 2-6 8-3 6-2 Over-45: J Biann (Surey) 2-6 8-3 6-3 Cover-45: J Biann (Surey) bt J Diring-Some (Middat) 3-6 7-6 7-8: J Wayne (Herrs) bt M Firmais (Bucks) 6-4 6-4 5-4 Over-45: Gladder) (Harrigo) bt D Garman (Suseed) 8-3 8-4; T Burgess (Chestire) bt D Horwood (Surrey) 1-6 6-4 6-1 Over-45: M Bown (Surrey) 1-6 8-1 Over-45: M Bown (Surrey) bt P Fisher (Herbord and Worcs) 7-6 6-3. Over-75: F Fisher (Burges) Carrey) bt S Fisher (Herbord and Worcs) 7-6 6-3. Over-50: F Fisher (Herbord and Worcs) 7-6 6-3. Over-50: F Fisher (Herbord and Worcs) 7-6 6-3. Over-50: F Fisher (Herbord and Worcs) 7-6 6-3. Over-75: F Fisher (Herbord and Worcs) 7-6 6-3. Over-75: F Fisher (Herbord and Morcs) 7-6 6-3. Over-75: F Herbord and Surrey) 6-2 6-4 6-4 Over-75: K Deves (Middat) 5-5 over-60: J Peatre (Esses) bt S Hodgen (Surrey) 2-6 6-4 6-4 Over-75: K Deves (Middat) 5-5 over-75: F Fisher (Surrey) 6-4 6-4 Over-75: K Deves (Middat) 5-6 over-75: F Fisher (Burrey) 2-6 6-4 6-4 Over-75: K Deves (Middat) 5-6 over-75: K Deves (

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HISTORY LESSON

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10-

Ø:

England meet Chile for the met nine years ago in the

The previous meeting, in friendly in Santiago.



CHRIS MAUME

SPORT ON TV

The media's obsession with anniversaries is sheer laziness. really - they're little more than easy pegs for stories. A hundred years is fine, 50 is OK. These days, though, they're like boxing world titles, popping up in

all soms of unlikely places. Although 40 seems a particularly arbitrary period, it would be churlish to complain in the week of the anniversary of the Munich disaster, and ITV came up with a fine film. I'm a bit of a BBC2 snob when it comes to documentaries, but apart from some gratuitous colourising in the footage of the Harry Gregg, there wouldn't Babes' last game, in Belgrade, The Busby Babes: End of a Dream served as a fine reminder of what the fuss was, and is, about

Gregg, Bill Foulkes, Bobby Charlion and Wilf McGuinness meant that all the usual bases were covered, but the makers

used their imagination in getting hold of peripheral figures such as Karl-Heinz Seffer, the rescuer who could confirm that there was no ice on the wings, and even Verna Lukic, who owes her life to Gregg. "Undemeath a lot of rubbish I found a baby," he said, while for her part she said: "In our family he has always been treated as a hero. If it hadn't been for have been a family at all." There was also an interview

with Tom Polter, the policeman who guarded the bodies when they were brought back to

varnish on the coffins. Whenever I smell new varnish today, I always think of those coffins."

A nurse at the Munich hospital, Gerda Thiel, was also featured - "their spirit of community was amazing" - and the referee in Belgrade, plus several United fans, who did their best to put into words what it was like to follow the Busby Babes and then lose them: "It was something similar to when Princess Diana died," according to Brian Hughes, who can only have been a lad at the time. "People said it was religious," he said. "It wasn't religious. Well, it was a religion, but it was a Man Utd religion."

Perhaps best of all, Ruby Thain got the chance to speak across and said: 'If this is the er hospital'."

Thain, who was unfairly recounted. In the film, the tenblamed. "He was the scapegoat," she said. "He made the mistake of being alive."

The events of the day are told well, in crisp soundbites. Twice Captain Thain tried to take off, before the party was sent back to the airport building for coffee. Then they were called back. "I had a cold feeling, I really did," Bill Foulkes said. "There were frightened

people in that plane," said Gregg, while Albert Scanlon described everyone changing seats. Back to Harry Gregg as they waited: "Johnny Berry said: 'We're all going to get fucking killed here'.

"Billy [Whelan] leaned

Interviews with Harry Manchester: "I could smell the up for husband, Captain James end, I'm ready for it'," Scanlon sion built up with the short intercutting. There might be a case for saying that the story hardly needs any narrative manipulation, but it was well done. Journalist Frank Taylor described the take-off: "I saw the end of the runway and said: 'Christ, we're not going to make it'. I thought: 'What a silly bloody way to die'."

The likes of Foulkes and Gregg have told the story many times, and you sensed them reciting familiar lines, but with feeling. "I asked the doctor: 'Where are the others'?" Foulkes said. "And he said: 'This is it'. 'Aren't they in the other hospital? I asked him, and he said: There is no oth-

After, came the recriminations. "I was very, very angry," said Marion Bent, Geoff's widow. Gregg believes it might all have been avoided in the terminal following the second takeoff attempt: "If anyone had had the courage to stand up and say: This is crazy', it wouldn't have happened. But, fike all people, we're afraid to lose face in front of our friends. It takes a very brave man to be a coward."

And as Busby told Marjorie English, Eddie Colman's girlfriend - when he rang her, saying: "I'm sorry, I'm so sorry" he was only a football manager: he wouldn't have presumed to tell the pilot how to fly his plane any more than Captain Thain would have told him how to run his team.

Some fans of other teams resent Munich, believing that the club and its followers imagine themselves as having some sort of spurious moral ascendancy. Maybe we do, but even for someone like me - not born at the time (I was in the womb, as it happens) - it lives down the years. As Brian Hughes put it in the programme: "People say you should forget about 40 years ago. But I can remember it like it was 40 minutes ago."

The last word is left to Gregg: They say they would have been the best team in the world. Maybe. One thing's for sure. They were the most loved team." And although it's exactly that kind of thing that irritates other fans, it's not far from the

African pride and passion on display in Ouagadougou

AROUND

THE

WORLD

RUPERT

METCALF

BURKINA FASO

Tunisia, who face England at the World Cup finals this summer, and Morocco, who will meet Scotland, have important business to attend to before they can turn their attentions to France.

Both are among the 16 countries competing at the 21st have faced so far, however, African Nations' Cup tournament, which begins today. Two the pitch when the host nation years ago the reborn South take on Cameroon in the 4 Africa won the event on home Angust stadium in Ouagadousoil. amid much tri-

umphalism led by President Nelson Mandela wearing a team shirt. This year the venue is far removed from the bright lights of Johannesburg and Durban.

The host nation is one of the poorest in Africa: Burkina Faso, The matches are being staged in two stadiums in the capi-

tal. Ouagadougou, and a new stadium in the provincial town of Bobo Dioulasso.

It was very much a political decision by the Confederation likely to win the tournament, of African Football to take its they have realistic hopes of prolagship tournament to Burkina gressing from the group stage. Faso, one of the continent's least developed nations. CAF had the size of their squad cut has stated that it wants to take from 22 to 20 by the organisers the biennial event to all corners on Thursday for sending in the of Africa in order to help upgrade facilities everywhere.

Burkina Faso took on the challenge and, although hotels and communications may not always be of the standard visitors are accustomed to, it is some- of poor results in friendlies.

be staging the tournament. Zambia, the scheduled hosts in 1988, pulled out at a very late stage, pleading poverty. So too did Kenya in 1996, due to internal political conflicts as well as cash shortages.

Burkina Faso have diligently dealt with every difficulty they and today the action starts on

> gou - which is also the venue of the final on 28 February. The hosts are in a

tough group along with Algeria and Guinea as well as Cameroon. They have, however, hired a top coach to try and maximise the potential of their team. Philippe Troussier, an itinerant Frenchman who has had spells in charge of Ivory Coast and

Nigeria and will be off after the African finals to take charge of South Africa at the World Cup. Although his team are un-

South Africa were fined and

list of names late. They have defensive stature of Lucas been beset by problems since Radebe. No other team has a qualifying for the World Cup.

The experienced coach Clive Barker, who led them to France, resigned after a series thing of a triumph for them to Their woes have continued and

Save the Gaffer Fund. The

short of the £1m ransom de-

Mr Gaffer, Brazil's flam-

he was kidnapped while check-

ing on prospective signing Che

Revolta. A ransom note arrived

earlier in the week accompa-

Barry Gaffer.



Brazil's Romario celebrates his penalty in a 1-1 draw against Guatemala in the CONCACAF Gold Cup at the Orange Bowl in Miami on Thursday night Photograph: Allsport

last month they suffered a humiliating defeat by Namibia, who are also at the Nations' Cup, in a Castle Cup tie.

South Africa's caretaker coach, Jomo Sono, is in ebullient mood, though. "There are still enough quality players in key positions that are better than the best the other countries have to offer," he said, "None of the other teams has a player of the winger that takes on defences like Helman Mkhalele and there are no other strikers like Phil Masinga. On the African stage, I believe we are still ahead of the

field and that we will win again."

Among those contributing

malicious, violent centre-

poet prompted Mr Gaffer's trip

to Central America. Heckin-

However, none of Mr

been as generous. Each said

they had to save their funds to

Worried fans at the Old Corn-nied by the sleeve of Mr cover lawyers' fees when his es-been able to do much yet as he

Sludgethorpe receive £1 m ransom demand attached to Gaffer's sleeve

field will today be asked to con- Gaffer's Puffa jacket to confirm

fund, currently standing at to the fund is Brian Heckin-

£1,074.27, is still £998,925.73 bottom whose conversion from

manded by the kidnappers of forward to budding alternative

boyant football kommissar, bottom said all proceeds from

has been held prisoner in the his future collection of poetry

Central American jungle since would go to the fund.

tribute to Sludgethorpe Brazil's its authenticity.

123 days... and counting until the World Cup finals begin in France

Even if Jürgen Klinsmann recovers from his broken jaw in time for the World Cup finals, his place in Germany's starting line-up is by no means certain. His less than convincing club form for Tottenham prior to his injury had not gone unnoticed by Germany's coach, Berti Vogts.

Klinsmann, currently Germany's captain, is guaranteed a place in the squad, however, even if his form does not merit a place in the team. "If Jürgen sees that his performance is no longer there, I'll prepare him quietly for that. And he'll understand," Vogts said this week. "He leads the team well, even if he is not playing. He will also be strong in that role." Udinese's Oliver Bierhoff, Ulf Kirsten of Bayer Leverkusen, Olaf Marschall of Kaiserslautern, Carsten Jancker from Bayern Munich and Fredi Bobic of VfB Stuttgart are Klinsmann's rivals for forward places.

tate is carved up. Already the was too busy coaching the team

trio have been involved in an in Gaffer's absence. Firem axed

unsavoury auction of their coach, Kit Mann, following

memories of the booze-and- last week's 6-1 FA Cup defeat.

birds life with the Gaffer. He during which Mann's 17-year-

in the Hughie Green class, or prepared to give the coach

a hopeless dud like our rival pa- another chance until he dis-

pers' editors. His current wife, covered he intended to play his

meanwhile, has denied reports daughter, Wanda Mann, in to-

that she had filed for divorce. day's match. Firem has re-

everything he could to get his kommissar back but had not Studgethorpe Brack: Serie, Phace, Ori, Smith; From, Pasta, Spica, Niggle; Massive, Unstartz.

The club chairman, Sir called Shaun Prone and Ivor

is, depending upon reports, an old son Herman played.

Ferguson's United provide precious link with Babes of '58

Of all the 40 years that have News. In terms of silverware passed since the tragedy of the Alex Ferguson is already more Munich air crash, this year, 1998, is the most poignant anniversary. Generally 40th anniversaries are only middleranking stage-posts in life - outshone by the quarter and half centenaries. This one is different, because never before has there been quite the resonance between past and present; never again will it be so possible for the dwindling numbers of us who remember 1958 to give younger people a sense of loss. The link, precious and fleeting like all things living, is the current United team.

This is a personal story, though one whose broad pattern will be shared by other fiftysomethings who grew up in Manchester, I was 13. The lights street barber's shop pierced

the early evening gloom. I was getting the customary "short back and sides". Suddealy the door opened with an urgent jangle. In came a flatcapped man in cheap, baggy

trousers. "The United plane has the ability to twist and turn in door shut and was gone.

There was a pause, the handful as I could to begin the evening's vigil by the radio.

I had been going to Old Trafford for five years, during which Barnsley at Old Trafford in the time the "Busby Babes" had filtered into the team. I remem- as Sheffield Wednesday cameber a 1-5 home defeat against and lost 3-0- all those years Bolton; men against boys, re- ago. On that emotive night redeemed by an imperious Tommy Taylor header into the net in bolstered by goalkeeper Harry front of me. But there had been enough magic to hook me for life. I had the autographs, the

pictures on the bedroom wall. Forty Februaries on, another Scottish manager leads another young team high in hope of European Cup success, a year after semi-final failure. "Matt 50:50." I remember the head- so this year than any year since

successful than Busby was as he lay in his oxygen tent. More importantly he has done things the Busby way, summed up in his cry from the touchline when the team was getting a kicking at Bramall Lane a few years back. "Keep playing football!"

The pre-Munich team were above all a team. More solid, more together as a unit on the field than their Sixties successors for whom the transcendent invention of Law, Charlton and Best obscured the limits of others. It is like the difference between Ferguson's first Double team - lit by Cantona, Kanchelskis, Hughes and Ince -and today's side.

Roger Byrne, the captain in 1958, had a modest, understatfrom the windows of the back ed touch, like Denis Irwin today. His understudy. Geoff Bent, also died in

the crash and was FAN'S EYE spoken of as a po-.... VIEW tential England NO 243 MUNICH international, a status aiready MEMORIES achieved by young Phil Neville. Eddie Coleman, like HAGUE Paul Scholes, a Salford lad, had

BY CLIFF

crashed," he blurted, banged the tight spaces, to get up the field and back again. Billy Whelan I don't know who he was, was one of those players who Maybe he knew the barber, could do mesmeric things yet maybe he just had to find some also dawdled out of a game. He way to come to terms with his had lost his place in the team own horror and dread and had as Charlton began to blossom. stumbled towards the light. In contrast, the main striker, Tommy Taylor, the big money of customers gazed at each buy (£29,000 from Barnsley) was other. I don't remember anyone a prolific scorer. On the left speaking. The snipping re- wing Albert Scanlon had won sumed, though I was oblivious the berth normally filled by to it. Then, cycling home, my David Pegg, a pacy dribbler with legs pumped the pedals as fast a powerful shot. Duncan Edwards was a national hero at 21 in an era unspiced with heroes.

Next week. United entertain fifth round of the FA Cup, just serves and third teamers were Gregg, Bill Foulkes and two emergency signings, the diminutive midfielder Emie Taylor, and Stan Crowther, a workaday left-half. They kept playing football

The trauma of the crash froze my footballing emotions. I am forever a 13 year old, more line in the Manchester Evening I had "short back and sides".

MAJOR FIXTURES AND POOLS CHECK

TODAY 3.0 unless stated

FA Carling Premiership 1 Barnsley v Everton

Coventry v Shetfield Wednesday . Dentry County v Aston Villa 5 Leicester v LB8ds ... 6 Liverpool v Southampton Manchester Utd v Bolton (9.15)

Nationwide Football League First Division

9 Bkrringham v Middleabrough 10 Bradford City v Charlton ... 11 Bury v Port Vale 12 Huddersfield v Stockport 13 Norunch v Manchester City......

14 Portsmouth v Notim Forest 15 OPR v Crewe ... 16 Reading v Tranmere 17 Sheffield Utd v Oxford Utd .. 19 Swindon v West Bromwich

Second Division 21 Bournemouth v Bristol City 22 Bristol Rovers v Chesterfield 23 Fulhern v Southend ...

20 Wolves v Sunderland .

24 Milwell v Grimsby . 25 Oldham y Blackpool 26 Phymouth v Carlisle . 27 Preston v Burnlev 28 Wican v Northampto 29 Wrescham v Luton

31 York v Walself Third Division

30 Wycombe v Brentford .

32 Brighton v Torquay 33 Cembridge Utd v Doncaster 34 Cardiff v Lincoln City...... 35 Chester v Mansfield 36 Hartispool v Darlington

37 Hus City v Rochdele 38 Macclesfield v Scarborough 39 Notts County v Shro - Rotherham v Exeter... - Scunthorpe v Barnet ,...

Bell's Scottish League Premier Division 40 Aberdeen v Hibernian .

41 Dundee Utd v Motherwell 42 Klimernock v St Johnstone 43 Rangers v Dunterline.

First Division 44 Airdne v Hamitton 45 Falkrk v Morton ... 46 Raith v Partick.

47 St Mirren v Ayr . 48 Stirling Albion v Dundee

Second Division 49 Brechin v East File ...

 kriverness CT v Clydebank Livingston v Fortar Queen of South v Civile Stranser.v Sterhousemuir

Third Division - Albigin Rovers v East Stirling - Alica v Queen's Park - Cowdenbeath v Arbroath

- Dumbarton v Ross County .

Montrose v Berwick... TOMORROW

FA Carling Premiership

Arsenal v Chelsea (4.0) ...

Second Division Watford v Gillingham (10)

Bell's Scottish League Premier Division Hearts v Celtic (30)...

HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier: Carnock v East Grinslead (2:37); Doncaster v Hourstone (2:0); Old Laughtoniens v Bartord Tigers (2:0); Readings v Beaston (2:0); Southgets v Guiddord (2:0); Seddington v Carterbury (2:30); Bromley v Oxford Linv (1:30); Hampstead & Westmister v Oxford Linv (1:30); Hampstead & Westmister v Werthgron (12:30); Hull v St Albarts (2:0); Indeed the Confederate (1:30); Loughtonough Students v Hampstead (2:30); Loughtonough Students v Hampstead (2:30); Loughtonough Students v Hampstead (2:30); Stoffed Hawkes v Chairs-lord (2:0); Shelfield v Stourport (2:30); Surbton v Steafers (2:30); Loughtonough Students v Hampstead (2:30); Stoffed Hawkes v Chairs-lord (2:0); Shelfield v Stourport (2:30); Surbton v Steafers (2:30).

WONLEN'S EAST Premier: Astrond v Si Al-bane; Cambridge City v Savenoeks; Dereham v Welnyn Garden City; Ipswich v Bury St Ed-munds.

WOMEN'S NORTH First Division: Blackbur v Layland Motors, York v Webon

BUDWESSER LEAGUE: Chester Jets v Greeter London Leopards (530): Crystal Palace v Bern-Ingham Bullets (530): Landester Riders v Thames Valley Tigers (530): Landon Towers v Man-chieter Gents (50).

Hockey

Baskethall

WEEKEND FIXTURE GUIDE

TODAY Football

3.0 unless stated
GM VALEGUALL CONFERENCE
Famborough v Lask
Hadnestord v Chalkbaham
Kathering v Gatestread

THE

TAPES

GAFFER

Resibidin & Diamondis v Halifax
Storgh v Hyrelord
Storgh v Hyrel
Storgh v Hyrel
Storgh v Hyrel
FA CARLSBERG VASE Figh roused Gree
Volering v Potters Ber, Kobgrove v Lymington, North Firshy v Barrich, Portfewen v Huden
nai: Spaicing Lied v Billingham Rown; Surbury
Eren v Ken Law: Sudory Wanders v Burgles
HC, Thercon v Gedsy Wanders v Burgles
HR, Kingdomat v Carstaltor Card City
v Gravesand & Aberthies; Sutton Lied v Emision
V Harrows & Handson v Gestraltor Card City
v Gravesand & Handson v Gestraltor Gestrale
Card & Handson v Bestralt Gestrale
Understand & Handson Rovers & Chertaey;
Ellencay v Hampton; Croydon v Bognor Regs; Lesherthaed v Thomp, Medicinhead Und v
Victimes; Molessey v Grays; Staines v Wentber
Graves v Kartherood; Leighton v Wilsymides v
Bertinghes & Handson v Bertingh v Wilsymides
v Karthon Gestraltor Chertural v Western Marbox v Bertonders Proto; Thom v Wilsem Marbox v Bertonders Proto; Thomps v Hamperion;
rooting & Wentber Best Thursdel Head v Baricortong v Handson Fiscionel Head v Corvinan Card V Epain: & Elect; Hertized v Southal;

Kingsbury v Lawes; Tirng v Aveley; Ware v Hornchurch; Wingste & Finchley v Cambridge UseBOARD (EAGUE Pressiver Divisions After the Variety Barnow V Bamber Bridge; Boston Utd v Blydt; Ernley v Hyde; Frickley v Amhorbant; Cambrough v Chorley, Guiseley v Cotayn Bay, Leigh Riad v Biehop Auckternd; Function v Actington Sarriey, Spersymoor v Largesser; Wheter v Droyladen; Burton V Netherfield; Eastwood v Bredie Borough; First Divisions Baybar v Droyladen; Burton V Netherfield; Eastwood Bern v Congleton; Great Herwood v Bredier Baybar v Droyladen; Grotter V Hermogae Reyn; Lincoln Bern v Congleton; Great Herwood v Bredier; Bridton; Windlick; Whitely Bey v Fibidor; Windlick; Whitely Bey v Fibidor; Windlick; Whitely Bay v Fibidor; Windlick; Whitely Bay v Fibidor; Windlick; Whitely Bay v Fibidor; Windlick; Dr. Baharzens LEAGUE Prensies Divisions Abion v Farsley; Worsson v Whitely, Lambridge City, Conclessor v Knigs Lymr; Gouceaster v Society; Burton Abion v St. Laonards Stamcroft; Crawkey v Cambridge City, Conclessor v Knigs Lymr; Gouceaster v Society; Berlinghourse v Aumeston; Termorth v Bardsern v Roger; Heisens V Rogers Heisens Divisions of Stamorth v Paget; Belevand v Ramort, Freelings, Granthern v Bradsey; Handley Lid v Shepshed Dynamo; Roching Guib Warnoth v Stater Novembri, Granthern v Bradsey; Handley Lid v Shepshed Dynamo; Roching Guib Warnoth v Stater v Sachenov v Fisch Eith Bellock; Weisch et al. Schulptige v Hamerit, Newport (John) v Cheffindry v Corbitien; Crey v Sade Green; Erith v Contribien; Contribien; Checken Borough; Parents of Section of Weisch Borough; Parents of Sections of Weisch Bernied v Sachenstein v Stater of Sections of Weischer Bernied v Backers v Stater Green; Erith v Contribien; Stater Bussel, Borough v Ramort, Section v Stater First Divisions involved v Hamer Ber; Swenier, Furners

errant.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE First DiUNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE First DiVisione Annatel v Solony, Easthourne Town v
Shoreham; Hassocias V Chichaster; Mile Clak v
Chichaster; Mile Clak v
Laderamboro: Padham v Ringmar; Peacotavén
A Talacombo v Hallanam; Rednill v Lengnéy
Spora; Salidean v Whitehawk.

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE Premier Division: Bynesbury v Long Buckly, Ford v St. Nects; Hobeach v Potton; Kempston v St. Nects; Hobeach v Potton; Kempston v Northempton Spender v Buckhighem Town; Weltingbrough v Boune; Wootton v Standon; Yaudey v Cogenhos. Weinrybrough v Botanie, woodon't Stanieut, Yaziej v Cogenhos.

SCREWFIX Ornett LEAGUE Premier Dis-sione Prisington v Benstaple, Bridgetter v Bid-ford; Bridgor't v Chipperhem; Cates v Paulton; Bronse v Chard; Keynsham v Odd Down; Man-potsfield v Meilshem.

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE Pre-mier Division: Amold v Densby; Brigg v Meil-by; Curson Astron v Liversedge; Eccleshill v Pontetract; Glassimughton Weiters v Cesett Town; Hattled Main v Hallen; Catest Ablon v Armthorpe Weitere; Pickering v Thackley; Sheffield v Selby.

Court Passes Weltare: Pictering v Thackley; Shefflett v Schy.

Shefflett v Schy.

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE First Division: Atheron UR v Saflord: Burscoop's v Chadderton; Citisare v Glossop, North End; Holker Old Boys v Vauntail Gill; Mains Road v Messey; Newcasite Town v Preschot Cables; Parrastotions v Darwer; Rossendale v Astranon Collerias; St Halers v Nersheldt; Warrington v Newcasite Town.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: Totton v Flormsey, Aerostructures v Andover; Bournermouthsey, Cower Vandover; Burston, Bastern v Passestone; Port & Town; Ely v Tiptone; Great Yerrouth v Halson; Sohern v Dies; Stommaries; Lowestoft v Halon; Sohern v Dies; Stommaries; Lowestoft v Halon; Sohern v Dies; Stommaries; Variander, Warbook, Harvict, Rypersiey Victoria v Bridginotti; Passell Vita v Knypersiey Victoria v Bridginotti; Passell Vita v Roder v Knypersiey Victoria v Bridginotti; Passell Vita v Roder v Knypersiey Victoria v Bridginotti; Passell Vita v Roder v Roder v Knypersiey Victoria v Bridginotti; Passell Vita v Roder v Rode

insatiable five-times-a-nighter

Gaffer's former wives have Hirem Firem, said he would do Niggle to replace the Manns.

Nevessás v Northalerton: Shidon v South Shaids.
PRIESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE.
Bros Pangers v Peterhead: Budle Thiatle v Keltr, Deveronsele v Fores Medhanics; Sigin Cityv Vieth County; Fort William v Reserburgh; Hunly v Wick, Academy; Lossiemouth v CovePangers; Rothes v Cadmicaudin.
SwiffNOFF RIISH LEAGUE Presider Division:
Belymana v Ands; Cafrondile v Portschers; Coleratirs v Omegh; Crussides v Glemonan; Genavon v Liniteid, First Division: Belydans v
Dungamon Swiffs; Carrick v Distillery; Limasedy Utd v Banger; Newry v Lama.
LEAGUE OF WALES: Aberysbryth v Newfown
(20); Serry Town v Esbay Valle (20); Cameses
v Carmarthen Town (230); Camese Ynys Mion
v Cornist's Cusy (230); Fin Son v Portsmadog
(230); Heverfordwegt v Fhayader Town (230);
Riyl v Weishpool (230); Th'S Lignantifield v

Conny (230); HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRE-LAND Presider Divisions Killebrity City v Bo-berriers (730) FAI HARP LAGER CLIP Second round: Africas

Town v Shasmook Rovers (230); Coth Flambles v St Patricks Athletic (230); Galvay Utd v Finn Hange (230); Longlord Town v Whitehall Renges (730); Sigo Flowers v St Francis (730). Rugby Union FIVE NATIONS Cha

LLOYDS & TSB INTERNATIONAL CHELTENHAM AND GLOUCESTER CUP

Group B: Ortell v Laicester, Group C: Weiterloo v Sale (2:5), Group D: Bedlord v Stacktesth
(2:0); Cambridge Univ v Richmond.

EWSON NATIONAL LEAGUE ONE: Harrogate v Rupby (2:15); Leads v Navkury; London
Weish v Heading (2:30); Morie v Nothingham;
Olisy v Lydney (2:15); Rosslyn Park v Liverpool
51. Helens (2:30); Wharfedate v Morcoster
(2:30); Two North: Hindsley Vielant (2:30); Lichrisch v Snettled (2:30); Nureston v Sandel (2:30;
Preston Grassingoen v Aspathir; Sadgley Park
V Manchaster (2:15); Southridge v Mendel
(2:30); Whinington Park v Birmingham/Solhul
(2:30); Whiston-super-Mara v Camberley,
Postponsed: Herley v Metropolium Police.

Firem said he had been

Cricket SECOND TEST (Third day, including to-morrowl; Queen's Park Oval, Port of Spain, Tithidad: West Index v England (205). SECORD UNOFFICIAL TEST (Second day Hockey

ESL SQUTH Premier: Backenham v Rich-mond; Bournemouth v Herne Bey; Chichester v Meidenhead; City of Porteinouth v Ferehem; High Wycombe v Wolding; Rengantla v Old Wingitians; Trolans v Anchorlans; Tunoridge Wells v Purty; Windiscon v Eastcots; Winchester v Gore Court. gneser v Gore Court.

DTZ MiDLAND Premier: Blossomfield v
Blowich; Edgbeston v Coventry & N Werwick;
Khalisa v North Starfford; North Notits v Hamp-ton-in-Andrein: Nottingfrem v Northempton;
Olion & West Werwick v Harborns. ADNIANS EAST Promier: Clackon v Cembridge Univ; Colchester v Cembridge City; Luton Yown v Crostyc; Paterborough Yown v Ipenich; Sud-bury v Bishop's Stortford. NORTH Premier: Ben Rhydding v Neston;

Chester v Wigan: Narrogate v Swaltvell; Nor-ton v Durham Link; Sheffield Berkera v South-port; Timperley v Formby.

WEST OF ENGLAND & SOUTH WALES Pro-mier: Shistol Univ v Exster Univ; Chestenhem v Belt Buccaneer; Clevedon v Swanses; Robin-sons v Weston-Super-Mare; Whitchurch v Taurtion Vale.

WOMENS: NATIONAL LEARLIF Promier

Promise: Crimson Rambiers v Lisicaeter; Ket-tering v North Staffis; Lution v Hairryton-In-Ar-den; Placiwick v Belper. WOMEN'S SOUTH First Division: Horsteam v Madonthead; Reading v Harrystead & West-minister; Southempton v Dutwich; Taker Hill v Handort; Windrande Hill v Winchester.

Herdort Mindamore Hill v Wintchester.
TRYSPORTS WOBERNS THREE COUNTIES.
First Division: Mitton Keynes v Herley; Mitton
Keynes i v Majornheed; Oxford Hawks v Bracknet; Oxford Univ v Windoor; Ranetegh v Newbury; Rasading v Wycombe Rye; Soming v City
of Oxford; West Witney v Faminam Common.
WOMEN'S WEST Premier: Bournemouth v
Radiand: Chelenham v St Austel; Euster v Colvell; Eumouth v Yaunton Valis; Yale v Leominster.

Basketball BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Themes Valley Tigers v Newcastle Eagles (BD); Wattord Royals v Sheffeld Sharts (730). Ice hockey SUPERILEAGUE: Basingstoke Blson v Cardiff Devils (630); Nottingham Penthera v Ayr Scot-teh Bagies (70). BOPRESS CUP: Bracknell Bees v Newcastie Cobras (60).

Other sports ATHLETICS: AAA England Indoor Champi-Annual ross on Engero vocor Championships (Birmingham)

BADMINTON: British Grand Stern (Kirkham).

BOWNS: Hish Masters Pairs (Country Anthm).

BOWNS: Professional promotion (Grundy Park Laisurs Centre, Chestum). SNOCKER: Benson & Hedges Masters (Wembley Conference Centre).

TOMORROW Football SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE Premier Divi-sion: Torrington v Westbury (20). RAI Harp Lager Cup second trumb: Cork City v Denry City (20): University College Dublin v Home Farm Everton (205). Second-round re-play: Shebourne v Dundak (3.5).

Rugby League FIRST DWISSON: Hulf Kingston Aovers v Leigh (2D); Rochdele v Hursier (30); Swirson v Keighter (30); Welediedd v Widnes (330); White-hauen v Festilherslore, (330). FRIENDLY MATCHES: Bradford v Dewsbury (10); Bradford v Balley; Hull v Castleford (375).

Rugby Union CHELTENHAM AND GLOUCESTER CUP Group B: London high v Exety (50). WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE First Division: Newbridge v Bonymaen (30).

ice hockey SUPERLEAGUE: Aur Scottest Eagles v Man-chester Storm (530); Cardiff Devils v Nothog-ham Penthers (500); Newtestle Cobras v Bealingstole Bison (530); Shaffield Steelers v Bracknell Bees (530). Other sports

ATHLETICS: AAA England Indoor Champs ALTHUR (British Grand Stam (Portsmouth)
BADUMYORE British Grand Stam (Portsmouth) BOWLS: Hish Masters Pairs (Country Archan), SMOKER: Berson & Hedges Mesters (Mem-bley Conference Centre).

TABLE TENNIS: Welsh Open (Caroff)

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Resurgent Everton shed blood, sweat and relegation fears

According to Goodison : Park's man; gement duo of Howard Kerdall and Adrian Heath, the club's return to form is all due to con: dence.

After months of doom and gloom at Goodiso. Park, the back-page lead in Merseyside's morning newspaper reflec's the upbeat mood enveloping Everton. But while Howard Kendali's manager of the month award may be the only thing they win all season, Adrian Heath is not reading too

Heath is in no doubt that Kendall richly deserves the bonour. It is just that under the football sub-section of sod's law, its recipients customarily come a cropper in their next match. Although there are few clubs where the past has a more evocative presence, this is one tradition which Everton's managerial duo are anxious not to uphold today.

Victory at Barnsley would plump up a nine-point cushion between Everton and the bottom side: defeat would erode their position dangerously. Kendall, 51. is too canny for what he calls "all that stuff about a game we can't afford to lose", yet is acutely aware of the stakes for which they are playing. As if to prove that none of Liverpool's great institutions is immune to collapse, the front of Heath's paper carries news of drastic redundancies at Vernons Pools.

When Kendall first came to Goodison as a player, in 1967, Everton were bankrolled by John Moores of Littlewoods Pools fame. By the time he returned as manager, 14 years later, funds were still plentiful enough for him to lavish a club-record £700,000 on Heath.

The assistant manager, now 37, had been an apprentice at Stoke when they met. "Adrian was a 16year-old cross-country runner and rience. "It's hard enough going I was coming to the end of my play-there with your strongest XL but ing career," Kendall recalled. "So we had several kids in. When this little fella, bombing around. they scored early on I embarrassed me a few times. He no, here we go'." always had the enthusiasm. Now he's got the knowledge."

five times, never more successfully than when Everton won two championships, one FA Cup and a European Cup-Winners' Cup in sink in." the mid-1980s. After they left, their hearts stayed behind. Last summer, Kendall forsook Sheffield United for a third spell in charge; Heath relinquished the top job at Burnley to join him.

in one critical sense, the Everton to which they returned was not the one they first knew. However wealthy the chairman, Peter Johnson, may or may not be, he is no Jack Walker. Despite the realisaject - or maybe because of it - fans that Duncan Ferguson could don blue.

a retrograde step now inundate local radio phone-ins to admit they were wrong.

The shift in public opinion is remarkable given that Everton propped up the Premiership as recently as mid-December. When they won at Leicester with a late penalty - their first away win in 12 months - there was an understandable temptation to invest the moment with the symbolism of Heath's fabled equaliser at Oxford 14 years earlier. That goal reputedly transformed a blue period into a golden era.

"With respect to Adrian, you don't suddenly have a very good side because you've drawn one particular game at Oxford," Kendall says. "We don't sudden-ly have a side who shouldn't be struggling because we won at Leicester. The real value was the boost to confidence. You should have seen the dressing-room af-

Heath had seen it coming for three or four away matches. "We'd had a good goal ruled out at Villa, missed a penalty that would have won it at Leeds and led Blackburn 2-1 with nine minutes left. It

BY PHIL **SHAW**

wasn't as if we were getting steamrollered."

The lowest point for Kendall came in October, a 4-1 capitulation at Coventry in the Coca-Cola Cup which prompted him to go on the pitch to show his displeasure. "It was the manner in which we lost that was unacceptable," he explains.

Heath cites defeat at Manchester United, 2-0 going on 10-0, as another chastening expe-

In between those setbacks, Everton hit rock bottom. "In hind-They have worked together sight, it was a blessing," Kendall says. "If you're fourth bottom, no one ever believes you'll go down. That shocked everyone, made it

Even though the club have endured frequent scrapes with relegation in recent years, Kendall's latest reign is inevitably compared with his first. "I want to be judged as a newcomer," he insists. "Management isn't about months, or at least it shouldn't be. It's about building something."

The players who have emerged as cornerstones of the reconstruction are a surprising bunch. Who would have imagined, for instance,

who saw Kendall's appointment as Peter Reid's former mantle as captain? In what Heath terms "a masterstroke, typical of his man management", Kendall did.

This, remember, is the striker who attracted the nickname "Duncan Disorderly" and went to prison for butting an opponent. Now he is to marry John Parrott's sisterin-law and is finally showing a sense of responsibility on the park.

Heath describes him as "a true Evertonian". Kendall, who admits the Scot was "fairly ineffective" early in the season, regards his form as "awesome" since the Frenchman Mickael Madar arrived to partner him.

Then there is Nick Barmby, widely written off as another expensive underachiever. Next Tuesday he plays for England B, having caught Glenn Hoddle's eye as a deep-lying attacker. "The graft he puts in in training is incredible," Heath says. "He's turned the situation round himself."

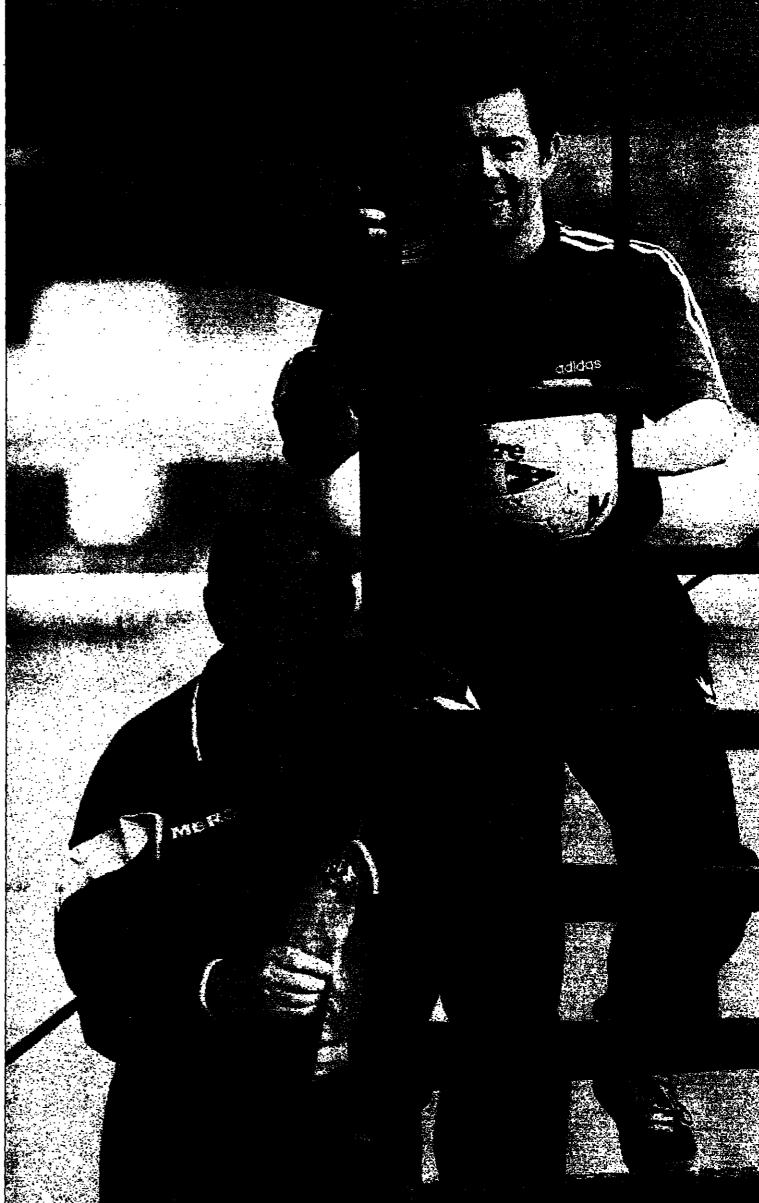
Whereas Ferguson and Barmby cost the previous regime nearly £10m, Kendall has been outspent even by Barnsley. Some supporters claim he was duped into believing Everton would be able to compete for the best. He sums up the situation more diplomatically: "The fans wanted big names. £5m players coming in. We did try for an Ince and a Ravanelli, but it didn't work out."

But, as he points out, the bulk of his most successful side were picked up for comparative peanuts in the lower divisions. He sees Carl Tiler as a modern equivalent. His signing from Sheffield United in November was perceived as proof of Everton's lack of ambition. The critics quickly came round.

Recruiting a young, unknown Norwegian, Thomas Myhre, to replace a legend, Neville Southall, was another example of Kendall having the courage to back his judgement. (At the same time, Liverpool bought Brad Friedel to take over from David James but have not bitten the bullet).

He also sold the one Everton man in Hoddle's squad, Andy Hunchcurre, conndept that one of several outstanding teenagers. Michael Ball, will play for England eventually. And when Gary Speed withdrew his labour, after having his head turned by Newcastle, Kendall used the situation to his advantage by confirming the popular Ferguson as acting cap-

With the club's overdraft reportedly running at £12m, it remains to be seen how much of the Hinchcliffe and Speed fees Kendali is allowed to reinvest. In the meantime, he and Heath will continue to impart their passion for Everton to a new generation of players. This is a cause, the junior partner asserts, for which they are ready to sweat blood. No



one should doubt that it would be In step: Howard Kendall (left) and Adrian Heath are shaping Everton's climb out of the relegation zone

Photograph: Simon Wilkinson

Smooth talkers ease pressure on men in the muddle

So, Stevenage were finally put for the Bristol and West Builda phrase beloved of footballers, full credit to them. The non-League side had thirdround whipping boys written all over them when they came not necessarily in a football out of Graham Kelly's hat; as would have been more appropriate, since they justifiably milked their big moment.

But in my opinion the real and especially Kenny Dalglish, cast as villain in this footballing soap opera. The episode did neither Dalglish nor his team any favours. Since Kevin Keegan left the Toon, Newcastle, once the nation's champions elect and darlings of the media, have fallen dramatically from grace. Predictable on the pitch, and a manager who has become public enemy No footballing equivalent of Max Clifford, it is now.

Instead Newcastle have got Dalglish, who is to public relations what Anthea Turner is to marriage guidance. Things might be different were Dalglish able to communicate with the press and public as well as he once could (and probably still can) with a pearing in an advertisement mote their club to the best ef-

firmly in their place, but to use ing Society instead of for BT - like signing for Manchester City from United - says something about his popularity. In Dalglish's defence, it is

manager's job description to be it turned out, whooping boys an expert in public relations. But while some (like Martin O'Neill, Harry Redknapp and Ron Atkinson) can be relied on for obliging soundbites, others losers were Newcastle United, are more likely to bite your head off, and (with Dalglish in particular) it is a case of once bitten, twice shy. The idea of media training

courses for managers has been repeatedly mooted and is something the League Managers' Association is "looking into" (let's hope they finish looking by the time Gerry Francis returns to management). Most managers would I off it; if ever they needed the no doubt claim they have quite enough on their plates already. Nevertheless, football clubs are no different to any big business in having to work at maintaining their images. After all, they fill more column inches than most both back and front pages.

For that reason (and not before time, it has to be said) most top clubs now employ a football. That he is now appress officer of sorts to "pro-



BLAIR

ON WHY IT'S GOOD TO TALK

fect to the most appropriate target audience". Their background vary as much as their remits - some are media trained; others only ever trained on a football pitch, like Rangers' John Greig - but all have, at times, an unenviable task. As Arsenal's press officer, Claire Tomlinson, says: "You can't legislate for what a manager or player might come out with in the heat of the moment. You can't just step into the fray and stop them.

But Paul Mace says that its not the aim of press officers to association for football's comact as a harrier between managers and players and the press.

bridges" between Leicester City and the media for six years now, and believes relations are improving: "Managers are getting younger and are more adept at dealing with the press.

That is not to say the press

officer has an easier lot these days. Filbert Street's press box used to hold 40 people and was only occasionally full; today, 84 seats are seldom enough. Plus Mace gets at least 12 magazine requests for interviews each week, on top of the daily calls from national, local and international television and radio. "A good press officer can save his manager and players a lot of time," Mace says. "When Matt Elliott got called up by Scotland we were inundated with calls, but we guaranteed the press a time to talk to him and everyone was happy."

According to Mace, there was only a handful of press officers employed by English clubs when he was appointed. Now there are enough to fill a Press Officers' Association, which will meet for the first time in Leicester next Wednesday. It is Mace's brainchild. "There has long been an mercial managers." he says, "And while ours is still in an

Mace has been trying to "build embryonic state it's an opportunity for press officers to meet on a regular basis to swap notes and try to help one another. The job's big enough, for heaven's sake."

Which is exactly what the Football Association and Premier League must have realised when they expanded their respective PR departments. It took Graham Taylor and non-qualification for USA '94 to convince the FA of the need for a director of public affairs - the ubiquitous David Davies - while the Premier League's press department only came into being in 1995, three years after the League's inception. Before that it was just one man and his phone. But while press officers

may have improved relations between managers and the media significantly since Cardiff's Kenny Hibbit barked to the assembling press after his side's FA Cup win over Rushton & Diamonds in 1995, "Look at you lot, you're sick as pigs. You're only here because you thought they were going to knock us out", it is doubtful whether if even the most smooth-talking press officer will ever be able to persuade the likes of Kenny Dalglish that it is good to talk

Speed completes his £5.5m transfer to Newcastle

Newcastle completed the signing of the Everton midfielder Gary Speed yesterday in a deal believed to be worth £5.5m. The outburst at fans following the Welsh international is eligible for the Magpies' Premiership game at St James' Park against West Ham today.

The 28-year-old former Leeds United player is the but denied a report that they fourth Newcastle signing in the last week and a half, as the Newcastle United manager, Kenny Dalglish, reinforces his squad for an assault on both the FA Cup and a European place in the Premiership.

Th minister for sport, Tony Banks, has rejected overwhelming calls by fans for a return to terracing. The vast majority of supporters at Thursday night's Manchester roadshow of the Government's Football Task Force voiced their backing for the right to stand at matches.

But the issue is not within the remit of the Task Force and Banks says the terraces will not return. A spokesman for Banks said that safety is the overriding reason why they are against standing at matches.

Tony Banks understands the feelings that there are, but the truth is that everyone understands the reasons wity Lord Justice Taylor recommended all-scater grounds," he said.

their investigation into Arsenal striker Ian Wright's alleged club's 3-1 home defeat by Blackburn back in December.

Scotland Yard have taken statements from fans who were at the game on December 13 were now ready to submit a file on the case to the Crown Prosecution Service, who will then decide whether there is enough evidence to bring charges against Wright.

Police said that "several lines of inquiry" were still being followed up, with witnesses being encouraged to come forward even at this relatively late stage.

Wright is alleged to have launched a tirade of abuse at supporters from the window of the team's dressing-room following the game.

Wimbledon have been given a boost in their bid to move to Dublin by European Union officials. The Dons, whose proposed move is being resisted by the Football Association of Ircland, have gone to the EU to ask whether they are entitled to relocate in Dublin.

.Willy Helin, a spokesman for the EU Commissioner of Com-"As a prima facie case, the Eu-

Police are nearing the end of ropean Union would have no objections to the move.". Mario Zagalio, the Brazilian

national coach, remained in bullish mood despite another embarrassing night for Brazil in the CONCACAF Gold Cup at the Orange Bowl. The world champions were held to a 1-1 draw by Guatemala on Thursday.

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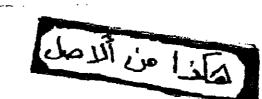
Juan Carlos Plata grabbeda dramatic injury-time equaliser after the Brazil captain, Romario, had opened the scoring from the penalty spot.

It means Brazil have yet to chalk up a victory in the competition after being held to a 0.0 draw by Jamaica on Thesday.
"We didn't play very well

tonight. Tuesday was better for us," Zagallo said. "There were a lot of errors in our passing. We made mistakes tonight but let us not forget that we have lost only one of our last 56 games. Romario made the break-

through in the 78th minute with a superb penalty into the corner of the goal after he had been bundled over by Engelvert Herrera. But Guatemala, who played

out another goalless draw last Sunday, against El Salvador in ... Los Angeles, hit back with Plata heading the equaliser after petitions Karel Van Miert, said: skipper Machon drove in a cor-



Bolton add to solemnity of occasion at Old Trafford

For 15 minutes today the race for the Premiership will be overshadowed as **Manchester United** remember the dead of Munich, Guy Hodgson looks at their match against Bolton Wanderers and other leading Premiership fixtures, while Nick Harris (below) analyses the programme match by

as the Munich air crash there is a large list of clubs who could stir sad recollections by their presence at Old Trafford today. Arsenal, for example, the last team Manchester United met before their ill-fated trip into Europe, or Sheffield Wednesday, the first afterwards to face the patched-up team.

Instead it is Bolton who will provide the opposition as yesterday's 40th anniversary is remembered and in many ways they are the most appropriate. It was Wanderers who played in the last League match at Old Trafford before the disaster (losing 7-2) and later they beat United 2-0 in the 1958 FA Cup final.

Nat Lofthouse, the scorer of hallmark of the club." both goals in the 1958 final, will a wreath in the centre circle to-

Park disaster in 1946 in which ly yesterday. 33 people died. Alex Ferguson, the United

off will be held back 15 minutes. said. "The style they set is the

In the circumstances, the rejoin Bobby Charlton in laying sult today should be an irrelevance, although no one will day and Bolton have appealed consider it such. Bolton have to their fans to honour the not won since I December solemnity of the occasion, and are anxious for points to lift warning that anyone misbe- themselves above the relegation having will be banned from the zone, while United's runaway Reebok Stadium, "We know lead has become a more atonly too well about losing tainable four points after three friends and relatives in a foot- defeats in four Premiership ball tragedy," a club spokesman matches. "It's their last warnsaid, referring to the Burnden ing," Ferguson said ominous-

United's travails have given hope to several clubs, but anmanager, also expects his team ticipation is strongest at Livto behave accordingly. "It erpool, who play Southampton would be appropriate for the at Anfield today with a nineheld at 3.04pm today, the exact ditions and standards laid down Premiership to their credit. at least three weeks, while David

even if they have a good lead," Paul Ince, their captain, said. People have been coming up with the same old rubbish that it's a one-horse race but it's not.

We're showing that." . So are Blackburn Rovers, who maintained the slenderest of leads over Liverpool with a 0-0 draw at Anfield last Saturday and who, on paper, should dispose of the hapless Tottenham relatively easily today at Ewood Park. Spurs have conmatches and have won only once on their travels.

Things were bad enough for Spurs' manager, Christian Gross, before Wednesday's FA Cup defeat at Barnsley cost him the A minute's silence will be players to perform in the tra- match unbeaten run in the services of Jürgen Klinsmann for

enchanted with life at the Lane. "That's a not a question [about his future] I can answer now," Gross said in midweek. Another stuffing and he may be even less forthcoming.

Barnsley, meanwhile, appear at last to be coming to terms with the Premiership. They have won their last four games at Oakwell and a position that seemed hopeless suddenly has an escape ladder dangling as a win over Everton ceded 26 goals in 12 away today could elevate them out of the bottom three.

Danny Wilson, the Barnsley manager, said: "The Everton game is massive for us, much more important than the FA Cup win over Tottenham." Everton's Howard Kendall won the manager of the month

With something as momentous time of the crash, and the kick- by the pre-Munich team," he "Teams can be pegged back Ginola seems increasingly disast the Munich air crash there." "Hopefully I can win it wryly: "Hopefully I can win it again in April."

With Arsenal and Chelsea not playing until tomorrow. Derby (sixth) could make progress at their expense at lowing a win over the champihome against Aston Villa while Newcastle United (10th) would overtake West Ham (eighth) with a handsome win at St James' Park today.

Gary Speed, Newcastle's £5.5m signing from Everton, will make his debut, but more intriguing is the confrontation between an England World Cup certainty, Alan Shearer, and a possibility, Rio Ferdinand. "Alan is the top man," the West Ham defender said, "but I look forward to playing the best. That's the only way I can gauge myself."

Leicester held themselves up against Manchester United last week and came away fully satisfied - now the trick is doing it again. Only Coventry have avoided defeat in the match folons and Leeds, today's visitors to Filbert Street, are among those who climbed the mountain only to fall down the other side.

Coventry are also on their way to scaling another peak, reaching safety before the situation becomes desperate. They meet Sheffield Wednesday at Highfield Road on the back of successive wins and might be 11th by tomorrow morning. What their supporters will do without their springtime dose of relegation fear is anyone's guess.

match.

Barnsley v Everton

Barnsley manager Danny Wilson is likely to make only one change to his side following the FA Cup fourth round replay win against Tottenham in midweek. Striker Jan-Age Fjortoft, a recent £800,000 buy from Sheffield United, is likely to replace John Hendrie after being cup-tied. Fjortoft or Hendrie will play in partnership with Ashley Ward. Defender Darren Sheridan starts a two-match ban. The Tykes are looking for a fifth successive win at Oakwell and three points which could possibly lift them out of the relegation zone. Craig Short and Tony Thomas are likely to be back in the Everton squad after injuries. John O'Kane's two-match suspension - after picking up a booking on his Everton debut at West Ham - does not start until next week. He will be able to play today, before missing the Derby and Liverpool games. Carl Tiler, who started his career at Barnsley, misses the game through suspension, and youngster Michael Ball will continue in the side. Everton's recent run of improved form



Blackburn v Tottenham

has seen only one defeat in eight Premiership games.

Martin Dahlin returns to the Blackburn squad today. The £I.8m summer signing from Roma has struggled with a back and calf injury all season but proved his fitness during a midweek game against Liverpool reserves. Kevin Gallacher will not play, as he is still recovering from a pelvic injury which forced him to be substituted at Liverpool last week. The Irish teenager Damien Duff is most likely to step in and partner Chris Sutton in the Blackburn attack.

Tottenham are likely to be without Andy Sinton (knee): Jürgen Klinsmany is out for those words with a broken day. Damen Anderton.
Alan Nielsen, an Welfer and Steffen wersen remain on manager Christian Gross's injury list. Chris Armstrong and David Howells both appeared as substitutes in the midweek FA Cup defeat at Barnsley and might be ready for Premiership returns after long absences. However, Gross could keep in Stephen Clemence, sent off at Barnsley, and push David Ginola up front alongside Les Ferdinand, a successful format in his first match in charge, the 2-0 win at Everton in November.



Coventry v Sheff Wed

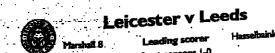
Marcus Hall is likely to regain his first-team place for Coventry against Sheffield Wednesday, the team he came so dose to joining last month. Hall became the third Coventry player to win England selection when he was called into the B squad this week, and will replace the suspended Noel Whelan in today's game. Defenders Gary Breen and Richard Shaw have rib and groin injuries respectively but are expected to play. Coventry will be hoping to maintain the form that saw them beat Bolton 5-1 last week.

Sheffield Wednesday's top scorer Paolo Di Canio returns to the side after a one-match suspension and could partner Benito Carbone up front. Andy Booth is doubtful with a groin strain but Graham Hyde is available after a two-match ban and is likely to replace Niclas Alexandersson, out for the season with damaged knee ligaments. Krys Kotylo, a 20-year-old former Sheffield Boys player, is in the squad for the first time and could be on the bench. Wednesday are unbeaten in their last five Premiership games.



Derby manager Jim Smith is without Paulo Wanchope (Costa Rica) and Deon Burton (Jamaica), both on international duty in the United States, so he might push Scottish defender Christian Dailly into his three-man attack, alongside Dean Sturridge and Francesco Baiano. Costa Rican midfielder Mauricio Solis will get a rare playing opportunity as a third non-EC player, because of Wanchope's absence. Smith has called 21-year old Rory Delap into the squad, af-

ter his recent signing from Carlisle. Villa will be without midfielder lan Taylor, who is suspended. Central defender Steve Staunton, who missed last Sunday's 1-0 defeat at home to Newcastle with a knee problem, is likely to replace Riccardo Scimeca, while leading scorer Dwight Yorke is free to play after Trinidad and Tobago allowed him to miss the Gold Cup tournament in the US. Villa manager Brian Little will make a late decision over the inclusion or otherwise of his transfer-listed Yugoslavian striker Savo Milosevic.



Leicester captain Steve Walsh is doubtful with a groin strain and Spencer Prior stands by to replace him. Greek international Theo Zagorakis, a £750,000 midweek signing from PAOK Salonika, is expected to be on the bench. Leicester's 1-0 win against Manchester United last week at old Trafford not only gave the Premiership title challengers some hope, but also brought an indifferent period of Leicester Premiership form to an end. Prior to last week, they had drawn three

and lost three of their previous six games. Leeds have Robert Molenaar out with a twisted ankle and Lucas Radebe is on African Nations' Cup duty with South Africa. With Radebe away, Gunnar Halle is expected to fill the central defensive vacancy alongside David Wetherall. Midfielder Alfie Haland should have recovered from the foot injury that prevented him from playing in the reserves in midweek and might make his first start in a month. Striker Derek Lilley, who has been an almost permanent substitute this season, is definitely out after a hernia operation.

...And statistics

Wenger profits from the derby factor

While there are six London clubs in the top flight this season, a quirk in the fixture list

means there are no Premiership matches in the capital today. West Ham and Tottenham

Monday when Crystal Palace play Wimbledon. One line of thinking says that London clubs suffer from playing too many derby games because they are often tense and bruising encounters which finish in draws. To some extent this is confirmed by the record books, which show that since the formation of the Premiership 31 per cent of London derbies have ended in draws. compared with 28 per cent of other matches.

travel to Newcastle and Blackburn respectively this afternoon, while

Arsenal entertain Chelsea tomorrow and landlords meet tenants on

Arsene Wenger, the Arsenal manager, has been among those arguing this case, although the statistics show that he has an excellent record against other London clubs. Under his charge Arsenal have lost just one out of 10 London derbies. Vinnie Jones scoring the only goal for Wimbledon at Highbury a year ago. The figures also show that since Wenger's arrival in the

capital only seven out of 33 London Premiership derbies (21 per cent) have ended in draws, compared with 29 per cent in other Premiership matches. Arsenal, however, have been involved in five of those seven draws. London derbies against Chelsea have been a particularly happy hunting ground over the years for Arsenal, who last lost

at home to tomorrow's opponents eight years ago, John Burnstead scoring the only goal of the game. The two clubs have met on 11 occasions in the Premiership, Arsenal winning six times and Chelsea three times, with two draws. Chelsea, however, have a good overall record in London derbies. In the first five Premiership seasons they took an average of 1.6 points from each

London derby; compared with 1.3 from other Prevalership games. This sea

the difference is even greater, with averages of 2.2 and 1.7 respectively.

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The London Premiership 1996-97 (Based on derby matches in the capital; final Premiership position in brackets ח

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Chelsea's Franck Leboeuf (Jeft) classes with Arsenal's Dennis Berghamp in the Gemoers' 3-2 victory at Stambard Bridge In September

London stalemates: how the ratio of draws compares with the rest of the Premiership Other Premiership matches **London derbies**

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FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: HOW THEY STAND

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Liverpool v Southampton Leading scorer

Steve McManaman will maintain his Liverpool ever-present record this season by shaking off a harnstring injury to face Southampton, Roy Evans expects McManaman to be declared fit for today and for England's match with Chile on Wednesday, Liverpool have minor injury doubts over Robbie Fowler (back) and Phil Babb (hamstring), while jamie Redknapp has already started light training after his cartilage operation and should be back in three weeks, Jason McAteer faces

two months out with his broken leg, and Rob Jones will deputise. Southampton will give an immediate debut to John Beresford, who completed his move from Newcastle yesterday and goes straight into the side. Beresford will play left-back in place of Lee Todd. Kevin Davies is struggling to recover from an ankle injury which forced him to miss last weekend's 3-0 defeat at Arsenal. Former England midfield player Carlton Palmer and defender Francis Benali are both suspended as they serve three-match bans while Australian international Robbie Slater is ruled out by a hamstring injury.

Man Utd v Bolton

Henning Berg is likely to return to Manchester United's defence as fellow Norwegian Ronny Johnsen is out with a calf strain. Scottish midfielder Brian McClair is also poised for a rare start as England international Nicky Butt is suspended. The champions have lost three of their last four matches and have seen their lead at the top of the Premiership cut to four points. The match will be overshadowed by the commemorations to mark the 40th anniversary of the Munich air crash. Kick-off has been put back 15 minutes to allow for one minutes silence at 3.04pm, which was the time of the disaster. while wreaths will be laid in the centre circle.

Striker Dean Holdsworth is likely to return for Bolton for the first time since injuring his calf two months ago. Icelandic forward Arnar Gunnlaugsson is away on international duty, as is South African defender Mark Fish. Midfielder Alan Thompson and captain Gudni Bergsson are both available after two-match suspensions, although the latter is nursing an ankle injury and rated doubtful.





Gary Speed, Newcastle's new £5.5m recruit, is one of three recent signings in the squad. Speed is likely to start along with Andreas Andersson while former Stoke full-back Andy Griffin will also play some part in the match. Steve Watson is out with a broken foot, while . Temuri Ketsbaia is on international duty with Georgia. With the perils of facing Stevenage in the FA Cup now firmly behind them, and with Alan Shearer's return confirmed by three goals, Newcastle will be hoping for an upturn in their fortunes.

West Ham's Paul Kitson is hoping to return from a groin injury to face his old club but may have to settle for a place on the bench, with Trevor Sinclair once more partnering John Hartson up front. Andy Impey (groin) also returns, and goalkeeper Bernard Lama is fit again. Samassi Abou is still suspended. Frank Lampard, named in the England B squad this week, pulled out of today's squad with a virus. West Ham have won just seven points from a possible 39 so far this season on their travels, but six of those came from recent games.





Arsenal will give a fitness test to England striker lan Wright tomorrow before deciding whether he is fit enough to make it at least on to the bench. The striker returned to training with Arsenal yesterday following a spell at a clinic in the South of France to clear up a harnstring injury. Lee Dixon returns to the starting line-up but Martin Keown and David Seaman are injured, and midfielder Patrick Vieira

Italian midfielder Roberto Di Matteo returns after suspension as Chelsea attempt to keep their title challenge alive in tomorrow's game. Frank Sinclair is away on international duty with Jamaica in the United States while Andy Myers is still struggling with injury. Gianfranco Zola is suffering the worst scoring drought of his Stamford Bridge career, having gone nine goalless games since his hattrick against Derby at the end of November, but hopes Ruud Gullit will name him in the starting line-up, despite the fact he was only on the bench for last week's win over Barnsley.

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CRICKET: SECOND TEST

Fraser strikes as England build on Hussain's heroics

Derek Pringle reports from Port of Spain. England 214; West Indies 63-3

It is not often that you get to hail a brave rearguard performance by an England team against the West Indies, but yesterday's efforts by Nasser Hussain, unbeaten on 61, and Angus Fraser, equal third-highest scorer on 17, were every bit as gripping as the ones portrayed by Stanley Rorke's Drift.

Coming together the previous evening, the pair added 42 precious runs on a spiteful pitch before Kenny Benjamin ended the innings on 214 with two wickets in successive balls.

In all, the pair batted together for 98 minutes to ensure a total in excess of 200, a benchmark that may yet prove to be highly competitive. It was the longest period of play in the match in which a wicket did not fall, exceeding by some 40 minutes the entire duration of last week's first Test at Sabina Park.

But if the pitch here was an improvement on that one, it was far from being the belter the authorities here were promising before the start, and so far the ball has bounced indifferently and seamed from both ends.

Such conditions are never easy for batsmen and it left Hussain with the tricky dilemma of trying to advance the score without over exposing Fraser.

Whatever the initial plan hatched before play began, it was probably amended once the first ball of the day had cannoned off Fraser's helmet to Stuart Williams at third slip. Following such a rude wake-up call, the pair decided to take whatWith a defensive field making the 18th over, bowled by Carl stead of letting the pitch do the runs difficult for Hussain, any advance was going to be slow and painful and the tall Middlesex bowler had to take his fair share of bruises in the process.

But if Fraser, a limited but competent batsman, excelled through a combination of brave defence and squirted singles, Hussain was outstanding, particularly in his dogged refusal to be cowed by the relentless barrage of fast bowling.

Apart from the steely mind and an unbending will needed Baker and Michael Caine at on sporting pitches, Hussain has the facility of making late, wristy adjustments to his shot. When the ball is doing the unpredictable, it is an invaluable gift, especially when the ball needs to be manoeuvred around rather than struck as the textbook dictates.

Patience, too, is a key, though it is doubtful whether stand, others quickly follow, England's vice-captain, who spent more than six hours at the crease, would have been quite so composed had Fraser not looked so able at the other end. Mixing sturdy defence with cleverly placed singles, Hussain had to wait until the first ball of

ENGLAND - First imnings

(Overnight 175 for 8) N Hussain not out

PORT OF SPAIN SCOREBOARD

Hooper, before collecting his first boundary of the morning.

What he casual viewer may not appreciate is that while the pitch was not lethal or particularly quick, no two balls behaved in the same way. It was an inconsistency borne out by some remarkable bowling analyses and considering that he bowled well within himself, Curtly Ambrose was flattered by his figures of 26-16-23-3. Not so his Antiguan team-mate Benjamin, who by removing Fraser and

England's second innings: Having opened yesterday's proceedings from the Pavilion End, it was not until Brian Lara switched Benjamin to the other end that he managed the breakthrough. But as so often happens against the West Indies when one wicket goes after a though the ball that first greeted Tufnell would have tested far

more illustrious batsmen. When England bowled, both Andrew Caddick and Dean Headley initially fell into the trap that tends to afflict English bowlers in the Caribbean. In-

2-0-4-0): Changerpaul 140-2-0. Progress: Second day: 200: 456 min, 1014 overs. Innings closed: 1133. Hussain 50: 262 min, 173 balls, 3 fours.

WEST INDIES - First innings

work, as Ambrose had done, they got drawn into adopting the roughhouse treatment meted out by the likes of Benjamin and Nixon McLean.

When Australia won the series here three years ago, their pacemen bowled a disciplined line and length, reserving the short stuff exclusively for the West Indies bowlers, who did not like it one jot.

After a fallow 10 overs. albeit a period where Sherwin Campbell was almost decapi-Phil Tufnell is on a bat-trick in tated by a good length ball from Caddick, the penny at last appeared to drop. Being mainly backfoot players, the home side's batsmen hate to be brought forward, which is what Campbell should have been when he edged Headley to Jack Russell, who took a tumbling catch.

The dismissal heralded the moment the home crowd had been waiting for, and Lara, made his entrance to a couch shell fanfare. Beginning cautiously, the languidity of old did not take long to resurface and the West Indies captain soon reached double figures with some neat clips off his legs.

However, Lara was soon embroiled in a sharp exchange with Michael Atherton, his England counterpart, after a catch claimed by Russell off Williams had been adjudged by the third umpire not to have carried.

Williams had added a further six runs when Atherton was again in the action, this time catching the batsman's leading edge as he tried to whip Fraser to leg. Five balls later the West Indies began to totter when Fraser added to his tally by bowling Carl Hooper behind his legs for one, the right-hander's feet having gone too faracross his crease.



Nasser Hussain takes evasive action from a ball from Curtly Ambrose yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

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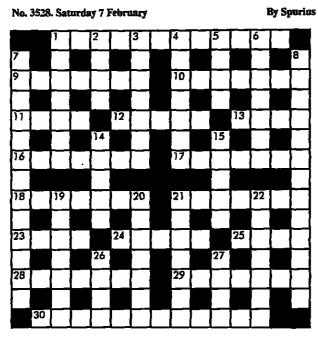
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THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution

ACROSS

He won't be the first to be dismissed (6, 6) Prickly rawness returns

10 Instrument in court case originally seen in Mer-chant of Venice (7) 11 Back in power, govern-ment increased in strength (4) 12 Flag, and person holding

13 A help when taking deep breaths? (4) 16 Very keen tennis played

by oriental (7) 17 Lean youngster consumes dairy product (7)
18 Adult class infiltrated by

extremists from Wigan Game in which we see one article after another

concealed by players (7) 23 Deity's diminished authority (4) 24 Mischievous girl initially prey to debauchee (5) Examination concerned

with poetry, not history

Force detaining rotter in course of criminal investi-30 Even-handed? (12)

DOWN

North American broad-cast about Cuba's just beginning (7) Attitude that is found in Merchant Navy (4) Trap poor Ann's landed in before (7) Ruler seems relaxed about public relations (7) Every English hospital keeps an account (4) Selfish person is to get

punished (7)
Breed of hyena? (8-5)
Where they're apt to be rolling in the aisles? (7-6) Vacuous academician ap-pears in middle of dinner

15 Notices in libraries slightly overlapping? (5)
19 Partner's problem, having quietly eliminated small furry creature? (7) 20 Poet, half German, turns

out to be one with wealthy patron (7) Conscientious objector at university permitted to produce a little poetry (7) 22 In Prussia unfortunately one missed start of solar

eclipse (7) 26 Presenters of nativity plays (4) Singer appearing in the nude - get her off (4)

reek's prozect operations and Dictionary of Quotations a blished next Saturday, Send solu-ance The Independent, I Canada ers and winners' names will be put to Saturday Crossword, P. O. Box 4 15 names will be promising the accordance of the consumer. P. O. Box 4018. The Independent, and, London E14 SBL. Please use the box an our own postcode. Last week's winners: T Squ. Cone. Workson; V Hadd

ed by Newspaper Publishing PLC, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E145DL, and printed at Mirror Colour Print, St Albans Road, Watt Back issues available from Historic Newspapers, 01988 840370.

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England's overnight pair hold ground to breach vital barrier

It would be impossible to give too much credit to Angus Fraser for the way in which he kept the West Indian fast bowlers at bay for the first 80 minutes play on the second morning.

He was a most dependable partner for Nasser Hussain and enabled England to take their score past 200, which was psy-

chologically so important. Although it may sound ridicu-

HENRY BLOFELD

193 than it is to finish with 214, far more than just 21 runs. A score of more than 200 has a infinitely more solid ring to it.

Fraser is an admirable cricketer and his gutsy performance was no more than one would have expected. In the first over of the day, he tried to duck lous to the uninitiated there is all to a Kenny Benjamin bouncer the difference in the world be- which struck him on the helmet and two overs later he ducked

ground and there was something splendidly defiant and heroic about his batting. It had "England expects..." written

for four leg byes.

all over it. Hussain was no less impres-

again and ball flew off his body on his toes dancing away to leg as the ball lifted; the next, as he But Fraser just gritted his played one which kept low, he teeth and got on with it. Many ended up squatting anxiously on times in defence, Fraser played his haunches and holding the the ball with both feet off the pose for a second or two.

Then, he would try and glance a ball to fine leg, fall away to the off side and miss it altogether. He would scratch the ground in irritation and walk quickly round the stumps, trying sive. Even if he was a bit more to dissipate all that nervous enlike a jack-in-a-box in his move- ergy. But he stuck it out, never ment. One moment, he was up trying to hit his way out of it.

RUGBY UNION: FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP

Blighty's mighty blowers save France's big day

Never in doubt, as they say in all the best rugby circles. The Felton, a former opening batstruth, of course, is that today's man with Somerset and France and England in front of a record 80,000 crowd was very much in doubt, thanks to the pe-ket and slow-roasting it with culiar and cringingly embarrassing problems surrounding the frost-bound playing surface at the new Stade de France in the north of Paris. Only the best efforts of a rus-

tic band of sporting horticul-turalists from dear old Blighty managed to save the showpiece fixture. David Powell, best known as a bruising England

prop of the late 1960s, and Nigel Five Nations collision between Northamptonshire, thawed the but Clive Woodward, the Engpreviously uncovered pitch by wrapping it in a protective blandozens of heaters, burners and hot-air blowers for three anxious days. "We've used up 500 gallons of diesel, but it's worked," Powell said.

Whether the ingenuity of Les Rosbifs will work to England's advantage remains to be seen, land coach, and his party gave the surface their seal of approval on arrival at the stadium yesterday. "It's perfect," he said. "I have no problem whatsoever with either the pitch or the fa-

There may be problems

ELEVEN PAGES OF SPORT BEGIN ON PAGE 14

ahead for the French, though, The emergency heat treatment carried out on the playing area has left the grass in poor shape -a curious brown colour, sparse in places and almost seared in

others. Stadium officials must now decide whether to relay the pitch ahead of this summer's football World Cup. The further damage caused this afternoon. by approximately 270 stones of French and English forward beef should help them make up their minds.

– Chris Hewett, Paris Danger signals, page 18







After illness strikes, the financial blow follows

year as having cancer, 21,000 in England and Wales involving breast tumours. The good news is that increasing numbers of

women survive the disease. But, as lain Morse writes, the financial problems caused by cancer can linger on for just as long as the illness itself.

It's the moment every woman dreads, when that casual breast examination in the bathroom reveals a small lump, or when a hospital consultant calls you at home and asks to see you imme-) diately after a routine cervical scan. For Joan Henson, a medical re-

ceptionist, the diagnosis came at a particularly poignant moment: "I was told I had breast cancer on Christmas Eve one year ago. It's a horrible experience. I sat in church on Christmas Day, surrounded by happy people and just felt so isolated. Cancer is very frightening; it feels like a death sentence."

A million miles away from Joan Henson's personal anguish, insurance underwriters and actuaries also weigh cancer in particular accounts for 10.6 per cent of all female cancers and 9.5 per cent of cancer deaths overall, while cervical cancer accounts for 2.6 the reported incidence of cancer in women under 35 is also increasing.

This is not all grim news: a spokeswoman for the Imperial Cancer Research Fund points out that a large reason for the increase in cancers being diagnosed is actually because of the success of screening programmes throughout the UK: "The incidence of cancer may be rising, but deaths from cancer are decreasing," she says.

The statistics suggest she is right: 62 per cent of women with breast cancer survive five years or more, of which 84 per cent of those diagnosed early survive for longer compared with 18 per cent of those where it is only picked up at an advanced stage. Some 58 per cent of women with cervical cancer and 70 per cent of those with ovarian cancer live more than five years after diagnosis. With ovarian cancer, the survival rate is 28 per cent. However, where it is detected early, 90 per cent are alive after five years.

But for many women, survival is not enough. Paul Cooper, a principal

up the odds of life and death after di-underwriter at insurers Swiss Re, says: to family history and smoker status. have been contracted by a man. She £44.95 per month. However, this is a illness than previously, while some can be cured completely. But the consequences of these illnesses are lifestylethreatening. They can include loss of per cent of tumours. What is more, earnings [or even] early retirement."

Joan Henson, 52, is "lucky" in that

regard: "I'm not well off, but something had made me keep my private medical insurance. This paid for immediate treatment at the Royal Marsden: I went in the day after that New Year. One of the worst aspects of cancer is having to wait for treatment. You feel the disease could spread at any time. But I didn't have to wait. Norwich Union covers my medical bill and the total must be well

over £20,000.7 Fear of financial loss after cancer strikes has meant that in addition to traditional life insurance, where cash is paid to dependents on death. there has also been a huge increase in sales of policies which pay out lump sums on diagnosis of a range of tumours, plus a range of other critical illnesses including strokes, heart attacks and similar.

The costs of such policies depends on a variety of factors, Mr Cooper says: "Normal factors like age, and occupation, but primarily with regard

tor; if your mother suffered breast cancer in her 30s and 40s, the cost of

the policy will probably go up to reflect this. Sadly, some women with this family history seem to avoid screening for early detection, despite needing it more than lower-risk groups." In recent years, a handful of insurers have entered the "women's

market", including one company, AIG, which offers a Well Woman policy covering against seven femaleonly cancers. For premiums of £5.85 a month a 30-year-old woman would receive £6.000 on diagnosis, £3.000 for surgery, £500 a month for two years, plus £100 a day for the first 100 days in hospital.

However, Fiona Price, a London independent financial adviser specialising in advising women, warns: "Insurers wrap products up with a pink bow and try to sell them on fear. The message is that these products often do not give good value as other ones marketed to both men and women. which cover a far wider range of illnesses at little or no extra cost."

Melanie Reid, aged 30, bears out Ms Price's comments. While her insurance policy made a huge difference, her cancer could just as easily few years ago to cover him at work. Lois our daughter, fell ill with E-coli, a severe stomach infection, which damaged her kidneys and meant she needed dialysis. The policy covered her and paid out £15,000.

"Then, in February last year, we found out that I had thyroid cancer. We were under a terrible weight and worried about what would happen if I couldn't take care of Lois. Both of us had been off work and were struggling to keep up the mortgage. But then, on top of the first payment, we received £55,000 against my condition.

"This money has been a real source of comfort. We've used some to belp modify the house for Lois and can afford treats we couldn't afford

Cover against multiple illnesses is often better value, as two contracts by market leaders Skandia and Allied Dunbar demonstrate. Skandia's Lifetime Plan, offers cover of £100,000 at a monthly premium of only £18.22 to a non-smoking woman aged 30 over a 30-year term.

Allied Dunbar's Protection Plan offers the same level of cover £100,000 but at a higher cost of donations.

rather than for a specific term, includes waiver of contribution, and allows both premium and benefit to rise in line with inflation. It also includes life insurance to the same value.

Most insurers charge women at least marginally less than men of the same age, for the same level of cover. But there are signs that some big players in the market are moving toward equalisation of premiums. According to Mr Cooper, this reflects the fact that as "women move into the workplace, they are taking not just the same jobs as men, but the same stress-related rates of illness".

Whether financially affected or not, for those who are diagnosed as suffering cancer, life will never be the same, as Joan Henson affirms: "This experience has changed me. I spend far more time with my family, particularly my grandchildren. I am more positive and my appreciation of life bas certainly intensified. Unimportant things fall aside."

Donations to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund: PO Box 123, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3PX. Or call 0171-269 3662 for credit card

INSIDE

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7/ANDREW VERITY

The great pensions robbery 9/JAMÉS RÚPPERT Cash and carry cars

11/FIONA BRANDHORST Estate agents'

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On 24.5.85 the objective of the fund (formerly impoin as Socibits) was broadened from investment in financial services to investment it any

used on buying to selling price with net income reinvested over a guide to future returns. It has been announced that from 6th April 1999 it will not be possible to invest in a PEP. However, the Government plans to introduce individual Savin noss. Exchange rates may also affect performance. Past performance by investing in a PEP. Save & Prosper is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO. We only advise on products and service and source individual Savin are based on duying to believe performance. Past performance is not a good to investing in a PEP. Save & Prosper is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO. We only advise on products and services offered by the Flemings and Save & Prosper Marketing Group. 1930/028 at the forefront of ISA development, in the meantime you will not be disadvantaged by investing in a PEP. Save & Prosper is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO. We only advise on products and services offered by the Flemings and Save & Prosper Marketing Group. 1930/028

A gilt-edged portfolio

gory stories

Labour's betrayal over pensions



NIC CICUTTI

PERSONAL FINANCE JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

I am becoming increasingly sions and prefer to make cynical about New Labour. It what are usually smaller conis not my province to com- tributions into money-purment on the Government's chase schemes. mean and stingy attitude to

planning their retirement in wonder whether the word "promise" holds a different than it does for the rest of us.

Barely a year or two ago, Labour was determined to convince us of its commitdecent retirement income.

i remember a long tele-John Denham MP, then Opposition spokesman on poured scorn on Conservative plans to privatise the state pension system. By contrast, he was positively rhapsodic for occupational pension schemes as an integral part of its "stakeholder" reforms.

Yet, as a story on page 7 shows, barely a few months in office have led to a remarkable about-turn from Mr Rhapsody in Blue. Denham. At least 500,000 hapless employees will face a cut in the Government's contribution towards their pension schemes.

In recent years, a growing proportion of occupational pensions bave switched from "final-salary" to "money-purchase" schemes. Employers guarantee their workers' pen-

Alongside this change, the lone parents and the dis- Government is trying to abled (although I just have). persuade us to opt out of its No, it's their approach to state earnings-related pension savers in general and those scheme (Serps), which it claims not to be able to afford. particular which makes me Anyone in an employer's money-purchase pension scheme which opted out of meaning for the People's Party Serps received a certain annual contribution to their pension, based on their income.

veals, Mr Denham is slashing ment to everyone's right to a the amount paid out by almost one-third. Over a person's lifetime the amount to phone conversation with be cut is worth thousands of pounds. Yet Mr Denham's justification for the cut is even pensions. Mr Denham contradicted by figures from his own Government Actuary's Department.

Except, as our story re-

The message from Labour seems to be that if about his party's support you want to rob savers, don't go for smash and grab tactics, try a little sleight of hand instead. As for Mr Denham, maybe he is right to change his tune. Perhaps I could suggest a new one for him:

We have been inundated by requests for The Independent's free Guide to Ethical Finances, written by me. which explains how to invest your money according to your conscience. You can obtain your copy of the guide; sponsored by Friends Provident, by there found it cheaper not to calling 0800 21 44 87. OF till in the coupon on page 8.

MONEY MAKEOVER

A better bet than bricks and mortar

Name: Jeffrey Davies **Age:** 68

Occupation: Retired The Problem: Mr Davies' income from both his state and private pensions is about £12,500, on which he is able to set money aside. He does not own a home but lives with his partner in her house, in Kent.

Mr Davies, who has a fairly cautious attitude to investment risk, has two small endowment policies, one of which will pay out next year, the other in 2008. He also has more than £100,000 in a postal account.

He would consider himself speculative with a small proportion of his capital and has recently purchased 635 Halifax shares. However, he feels the stock market is "so high that it is likely to fall before long".

Mr Davies's main aim is to enhance his income and he is considering the purchase of two, perhaps three, flats for letting purposes. He would like to pass on as much as possible of his assets to his beneficiaries. without jeopardising his own situation and lifestyle.

The Adviser: Andy Harris, independent financial adviser at Maddison Monetary Management, 44 High Street, Bagshot, Surrey, 0800 0742233.

The Advice: Property can be a good source of additional income and capital appreciation. However, as Mr Davies quite rightly points out, it can also be a headache. The potential issues include the lack of, or problems, with tenants; liability to income tax on profits; maintenance costs; initial and ongoing expenses as well as liability to capital gains tax on any future sale proceeds. Given Mr Davies' circumstances, I would not recommend that he invest in property.

His partner owns the property in which they live and he is not a named beneficiary of her will or the property, so Mr Davies will need to allow for the of income in excess of £15.600. potential purchase of a property down to a minimum of £4,045 in the forum and is combutable (the current personal allowance). allowing £50,000 to this end.



Income options: Jeffrey Davies could consider investment bonds

Mike GelVKN&P

Although he feels that his net income exceeds his expenditure by approximately £2,000 per annum, this money is not saved at present. Therefore, it would be prudent to assume that his actual expenditure is closer to £11,000.

He would like an additional gross annual income of about £6,000. Careful consideration has to be given to this in order not to cause a reduction in his age allowance, currently £5,220 per annum, allowable from 65. This can fall by £1 for every £2 down to a minimum of £4,045

First and foremost, Mr

Davies should consider setting aside £5,000 as a cash reserve which is instantly accessible and available for any emergencies.

Safeway Bank is offering 7.3 per cent gross interest on balances in excess of £1,000. It also has a link with Abbey National, with whom Mr Davies currently holds his savings.

Long-term care is a growing concern for the older generations, given that the Government will only support those with savings and investments of less than £16,000. Serious consideration should therefore be given to methods of funding this.

Mr Davies could consider using a plan which incorporates

long-term care benefits, such as Royal Skandia's Care Account, however, these plans tend to be more expensive than other similar forms of investment due to the fact that the long-term cover benefits are costed in.

As the capital may need to be used for something other than long-term care, such as the purchase of a property, Mr Davies could be incurring unnecessary costs.

National Savings Certificates can provide security of capital with tax-free income if held for five years. Mr Davies should therefore invest £10,000 affecting his age allowance. (the maximum allowable) into This is because withdrawals of 11th issue index-linked certifi-

cates, currently offering 2.75 per cent above inflation. As he invested £3,000 into a tax-exempt special savings account (Tessa) in March 1997, Mr Davies should therefore invest a further £6,000 over the next four years, as existing Tessas will be allowed to run their full five-

vidual Savings Accounts (ISAs). Although Mr Davies would not normally consider personal equity plans (PEPs), advantage should be taken of the limited opportunity available prior to the advent of the proposed ISA. The Halifax shares should also be "Pepped" into a single company PEP, thus avoiding tax currently payable on dividends

year term before having to be

rolled over into the new Indi-

and any future capital gains. A maximum of £6,000 per annum can be invested into a general PEP and, given Mr Davies' risk tolerance, I would recommend he opt for a relatively cautious fund such as Guinness Flight's Cautious Managed Fund. This aims to invest at least 30 per cent of its assets into more secure bonds and Government securities.

Mr Davies should invest £6,000 now in the above PEP and a further £6,000 at the start of the 1998/99 tax year into an alternative PEP for diversification, such as a corporate bond PEP. This could be funded from his endowment plan maturing in April 1999. Investment at the start of the tax year will provide the maximum tax-free growth over the next 12 months.

After allowing for the above investments and cash reserve, Mr Davies will be left with £80,000. This capital could be "allocated" to provide for the above-mentioned long-term care and/or property purchase, while providing potential capital growth and supplementary income as required. Putting £70,000 in an investment bond would enable him to withdraw £3.500 per annum without up to 5 per cent of the original

investment are deemed a return of capital, as opposed to income. Should be require more in-

come, as a basic-rate taxpayer be can make further withdrawals with no tax-liability, as it has been paid in the funds. I would recommend the in-

vestment is left to grow for two years - in other words, the first withdrawal should be from "interest" rather than original capital. Canada Life's Mercury Balanced Investment Fund, in its

investment bond range, balances actively managed holdings of UK blue-chip shares with lower-risk investments such as gilt-edged index linked, other fixed-interest securities, cash deposits and property.

In addition to an excellent track record of fund performance over one, three and five years in comparison with other funds within the same sector. the charges are very reasonable given that for investment in excess of £50,000, an additional allocation of 3 per cent is granted.

The remaining capital of £10,000 can be used to supplement Mr Davies' income in the first two years and should remain in his postal account. He should also continue funding his existing endowment plans to maturity in order to . benefit from its terminal

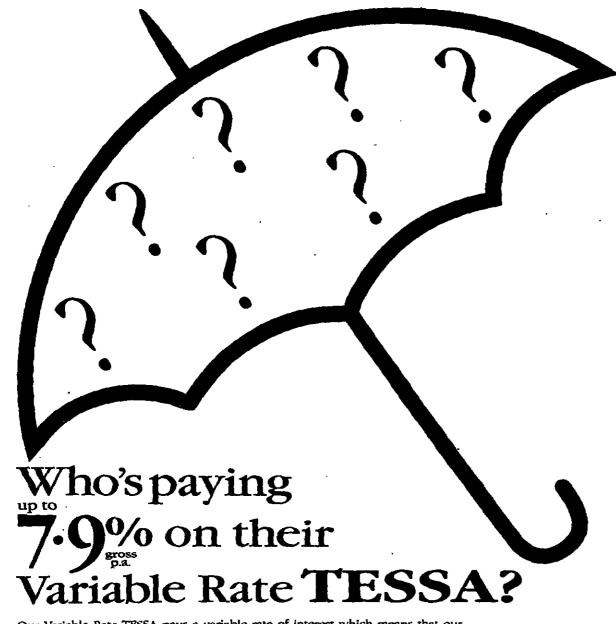
Currently, inheritance tax is not an issue as his estate is valued at less than the nil-rate band of £215,000, although the current limit could reduced in the March Budget.

A gift of £30,000 was made by Mr Davies to his son in August 1997. Under current legislation this is a potentially exempt transfer (PET) for inheritance tax purposes as long as he lives for a further six and a half years. Given his current income needs, further PETs may not be a option.

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One final point worth noting is that the above recommendations would change considerably should Mr Davies



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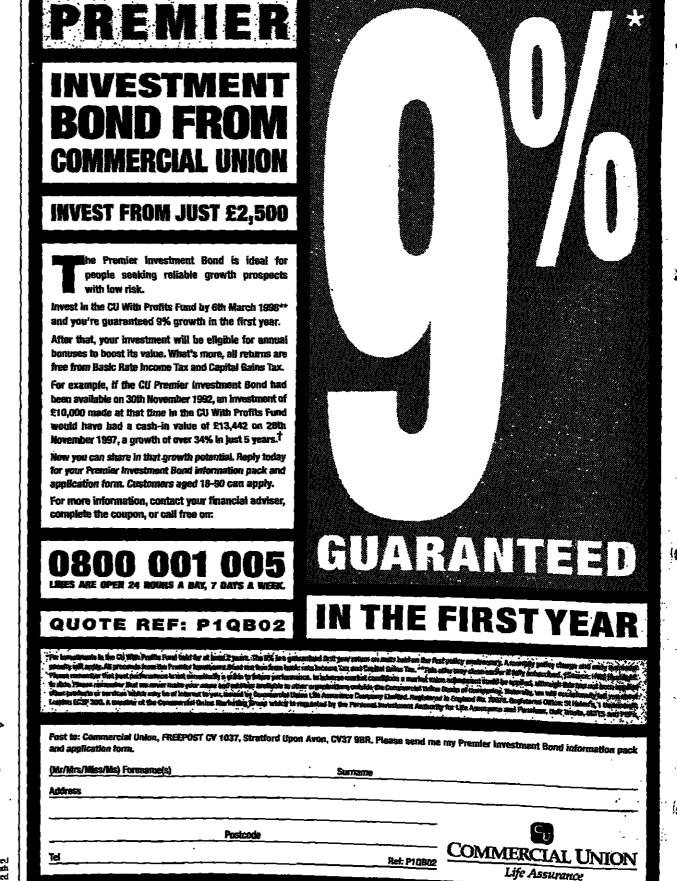
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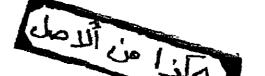
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Oriental carpets take off as designers pile in

Christie's is selling the £1m collection of !22 Oriental carpets accumulated by the Italian carpet dealer Romolo Battilossi – at a time when prices for hand-knotted carpets are being swayed by American fashion. John Windsor reports on investments underfoot.

Never mind the number of knots to the inch. Never mind the worn bits. American interior designers are going for a "look". For them, carpets with central medallions are out. Interlocking overall patterns are in. All because there are more ways of arranging furniture - especially the dining table - without a target-like blob in the middle of the floor. Pastel rather than strong colours are preferred - Americans expect their carpets to

blend, not to show off. Collectors of antique carpets. as opposed to home-makers who can afford only modern gracing a New York apartment. carpets, still buy for authenticity above all. But the fashion for overall patterns of foliage or the biscuit. In December,

has now spread from the mod- took \$110,000 for a Tabriz with £950 from Liberty in Regent Allane, published by Thames ern to the antique market.

Western importers have imposed Western tastes on Oriental weavers ever since the British-Swiss Ziegler company, originally importers of cloth, opium and dried fruit, set up trends in mind if they want their a carpet-buying office in Sultanabad in Persia in 1882. They specified no medallions and it is "Zieglers", "Ziegler Mahals" and "Sultanabads" that are back in fashion today.

Prices for bold-patterned, loosely knotted Turkish Ushak carpets, made in large quantities for stores such as Liberty and Maples from around 1890, and considered by some to be the "poor man's Ziegler", have benefited from the trend. Bonhams is offering one next week, estimated £2.500-£3,000. Most recently, auction prices for the more detailed, overall-patterned Tabriz carpets from Azerbaijan (north-west Persia) have surged, regardless of quality.

A cropped and worn 22ft by 18ft Ziegler of about 1880, estimated £15,000-£25,000 in Christie's October sale, sold for an astonishing £57,600 to a trade buyer and is probably now For really mad prices for the right "look", New York takes

large-scale overall design, estimated at only \$20,000-\$30,000.

Home-makers with an eye for investment and only a couple of thousand pounds to newly bought Oriental carpet to crously inflated price for 28 hold its value. Prices in the retail market are about 30 per cent trading regulations. down in real terms compared with 10 years ago, and British importers are ordering fine quality carpets - with the right designs - from India (not previously noted for quality), from skilled, refugee Afghan weavers settled in northern Iran, and even from Egypt. The market

could be becoming overstocked. Whether or not prices hold up, buying from a dealer who has driven down makers' prices is cheaper than buying from tourist bazaars in the country of origin.

Liberty's carpet buyer, Ron Stewart, reports big demand for strongly coloured high-pile gabbeh (unclipped) carpets made by the Fars people of Persia (now south Iran). They have simple, naive and sometimes abstract all-over designs, no medallions and sometimes no borders. The Western-influenced designs were introduced only six or seven years ago. An birds, rather than medallions. Christie's New York saleroom 8ft 6in by 5ft 3in gabbeh costs Rugs: A Buyer's Guide by Lee more curvilinear Persian de-

Street, London.

Think twice before buying from cut-price bucket shops. Those 50 per cent reductions may be genuine - but all they spend should bear fashion mean is that the carpets have been displayed at some ludidays, in order to comply with

> Yuda Ambalo, the 30-yearold Afghan who founded the Oriental Carpet Centre in Finsbury Park, which houses 30 dealers, has noticed that buyers for the home either rely on the advice of interior designers or get deeply involved, buying guide books, learning to understand designs and how to tell the difference between chemical and natural dyes. Above all, they shop around.

"City" carpets, hand-woven in urban factories from patterns, may have a comforting uniformity of quality and design, but there are no two tribal rugs alike. Tribal weavers "knot out of their heads" instead of following patterns. Mistakes and irregularities give tribal rugs their charm. But the only way to find out if you are being overcharged for one is to compare dealers' prices. Mr Ambalo also strongly recommends Tribal

signs, perhaps, says Christie's and Hudson at £8.95.

Modern Chinese and Pakistani carpets bear cryptic but helpful quality tags. A heavy quality 12ft by 9ft Chinese carpet from Liberty, priced £1,000-£1,200, will have a tag announcing "90-line 5/8ths super washed". A Bokhara-design Pakistan of the same size, of medium grade, £1,300-£1,400, will have a tag with the knotcount "11/22".

Price fluctuations can be purely political. Colourful flatwoven kilims from Afghanistan and Iran glutted the Western market during the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and the Gulf War, as weavers fled. A 8ft by 4ft Shahsavan kilim that might have fetched a peak £750 up to 1990 could be had for only £450-£500 in 1995. Now prices are creeping back to 1990 levels.

The fear and uncertainty of new buyers has meant that carpet brokers and retailers who have earned recommendations for trustworthiness have prospered. Mr Ambalo recommends the Oriental Rug Gallery of St Albans, Eton and Guildford, Or commission a broker to bargain with wholesalers at a bonded warehouse.

Trends of the future? Towards

that Kirmans, made near Fars, are undervalued. One in his forthcoming sale, with ice-blue field, firsty foliage - and a medallion - woven around 1880, is estimated £10,000-£14,000. And for long-term investors willing to buck the fashion trend, there is

William Robinson. He thinks

a traditional central Persian Kashan "Mochtasham" (the name of the original weaver) of about 1890, with strong colours, intricate design and medallion estimated £12,000-£16,000. You can buy a Kashan rug retail for £1,200-£1,500 today that would have sold for £2,500-£3,000 10 years ago.

Julian Blair, co-founder of the Oriental Rug Gallery, reports that, just recently, the Americans have started buying strong colours again. "Britain is usually about three years behind," he says.

The Battilossi carpet sale: Wednesday 2.30pm, Christie's, 8 King Street, London SW7 (0171-839 9060). Bonhams Oriental and European rugs and carpets sale: Tuesday 2pm. Oriental Rug Gallery: St Albans (01727 841046), Eton (01753 623000). Guildford (01483 457600). Broker: David Wilkins (0171-722

مكذا من ألاصل

Ushak rug to be auctioned at Bonhams on Tuesday, est price £2,500+



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How to track down a TEP



ROBIN AMLÕT **INTERNET INVESTOR**

potential alternatives to the panies to offer fewer hostages proposed Individual Savings to fortune over the term of the Account, which is a lot less policy. tax-efficient than tax-exempt special savings accounts hostage to fortune on the part (Tessas) and personal equity of the policyholder or secondplans (PEPs). Run Tessa and PEP together fast enough caveat aside, it is hard to argue and you get TEP, the acronym with statistics showing maturfor a traded endowment pol- ing second-hand endowment icy. While not necessarily policies offering double-digit tax-efficient, TEPs can still be annual returns.

pays income tax and capital gains tax on the underlying policy are not generally subject consist solely of the home page inal policyholder.

However, without going - to others which include into tiresome detail about the explanatory guides and price different rules for "qualifying", "non-qualifying" and "paidup" policies, suffice to say that Ltd (AAP), for example, is the the policy proceeds are subject to capital gains tax (CGT) in the hands of a purchaser. Yet £25m publicly quoted ensince most of us do not use up our capital gains tax allowance, much of the policy gains can Barclays Global Investors. usually be sheltered within the AAP's website offers potential annual CGT allowance.

are not just taking a punt on the ments by filling in an e-mail markets but also on the generosity of the insurance com- from the site, requesting a pany which runs the policy. standard valuation form -What the round of bonus policy valuations are free and declarations last month has without obligation. reinforced is the continuing swing from annual bonuses to market-maker which includes Neville James: terminal bomises.

final maturity value - already have a list of policies on its site around a third or more - of the but dangles the enticing endowment policy is coming prospect of a possible return for Endowments Direct: from the terminal bonus. It is policy sellers in excess of 40 per

I am still casting about for a way for the insurance com-

But it does mean a larger hand purchaser. However, that

The insurance company of TEP market-makers have assurance policies underwritten running the endowment policy websites, which vary in content by the top 50 UK assurers. The and usefulness from the rather bare offering from Beale companies with links to their fund, but the proceeds of the Dobie - which appears to websites (if they have one). to tax in the hands of the orig- and a page of its office addresses and telephone numbers lists of available policies.

Absolute Assigned Policies appointed policy supplier to the BZW Endowment Fund, a dowment-policy investment fund, which is managed by TEP purchasers the ability to When you buy a TEP you specify investment requireform. Sellers may also e-mail

Neville James is another a price list of policies on its web-That is to say, more of the site. SurrendaLink does not

cent above the insurance company's quoted surrender value.

You cannot buy a TEP on the web from any of these market-makers but you can bid for one in a cyber auction held by Endowments Direct, which holds live auctions on-line every working day. You are required to register to enter the Endowments Direct website, although no charge is made for looking around.

If you sell your policy through Endowments Direct, there is a minimum commission payable of £250. If you buy through the website, in addition to the bid price, you face legal fees of £100 plus VAT. The service was set up by TEP So where can we find such broker IPTC and deals in policies on the web? A number second-hand with-profits life site includes a listing of these

> Free policy valuation is offered for sellers. Purchasers may read an extremely complicated document on the site called "Computing the estimated price by iteration". This document is technical in nature and attempts to explain stepby-step how to compute a purchase price for a security, such as a traded endowment policy.

It would have been much more user-friendly if, instead of suggesting you grab a blank piece of paper, IPTC had mounted a value calculator along the lines of the calculators offered by many mortgage broker/lender websites.

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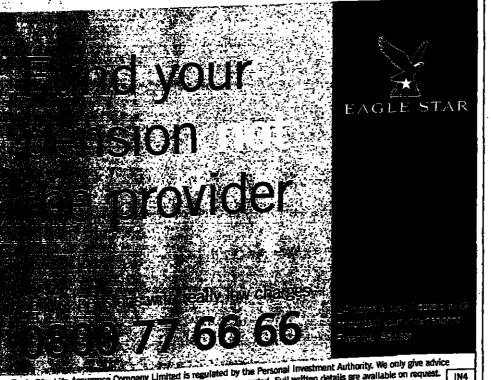


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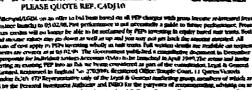
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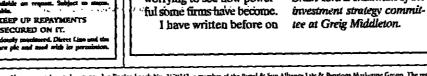
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BRIAN TORA

Merger mania boosts shares

Sometimes I wonder what it how multi-national corpomight have been like to have rations have more wealth been a headline writer. and exert greater influence Those pithy phrases are de- than many countries. Insigned to capture people's deed, I read recently that the attention and deliver a great 400 wealthiest people in the deal of information in very few words. Just now, the ob- poorest nations. So much for vious headline to describe our own stock market would be "Merger Mania Boosts Shares". It is difficult to know how to describe the

present situation better. field. The reasoning then was an incoming Labour government would be more likely to obstruct corporate activity. In this, as in so many ways, today's Government is proving relatively indistinguishable from its predecessor thus far. Meanwhile, the steady globalisation of trade is leading to a frenzy of merger activity all around the world.

The big news was the impending marriage between Glaxo and SmithKline Beecham. The drugs industry is no stranger to alliances. Both partners in this particular deal are themselves the product of relatively recent mergers. SmithKline jilted the effects of the Asian crisis another potential suitor in order to tie the knot with Glazo. American Home ing hostilities in the Gulf, it Products may even now he would be as well not to take looking at alternatives.

Karl Marx wrote that capitalism must fail eventually because successful companies lacked today's information technology, corporate regulation and competitive environment. Even so, it is worrying to see how power- Brian Tora is chairman of the

world own more than the 44 greater equality. With bidders lining up for Energy Group and GUS try-

ing to take out troubled Argos, the industries touched by this M&A rampage are Both 1996 and early 1997 many and varied and the were active in the takeover profits delivered to investors considerable to compensate for the lack of windfall bonuses this year. It also has the ring of perpetual motion about it. Takeovers tend to reduce the supply of equity. Shortages push up prices. It is not just the victims of corporate predators that see their share values rise in circumstances such as this.

> It is not too cynical to believe that heightened corporate activity can be the sign of a mature bull market. Things have changed, though, so it is probably too simplistic to believe this is the last rush of the unwary before realism sets in. Still, with still under-represented in Western markets and loomthe burst of takeover activity as a sign that a new golden

age for investors is dawning. Instead, it strikes me that inevitably become larger, so an opportunity exists for inreducing competition. He vestors to weed out shares was writing at a time when we and take profits ahead of a Budget which is likely to be less friendly to those who place their faith in equities.

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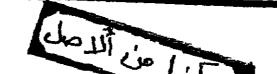
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Source: Micropal, offer to bid, net income reinvested to 1 January 1998. Launch date 13 October 1986. Issued by Framlington Unit Management Limited, member of the Framlington Marketing Group. Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO. Member of AUTIF. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. The price of units and the income from them can go changes in exchange rates will affect the value of the Fund's overseas investments.

Investment in single sector funds offers the possibility of higher returns but may also involve a higher degree of risk. The Government has announced that from 1999 tax advantaged schemes, such as PEPs and TESSAS, will be replaced with a new ual Savings Account (ISA). Details of the ISA are currently subject to itation and the final form is not yet known.





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# Know your rights as a shareholder ... and claim your perks

When you buy a share in a company, you voucher, which you should keep for when become a part-owner of the enterprise, you complete your tax return. Under company law, this entitles you to certain rights. Some of these relate to the dend due shortly after you purchased the financial aspects of owning shares, while othtified to receive. You may take action to make your views known on the company's performance or its activities. Some companies also give shareholders certain perks, usually as discounts on their products or services.

First, let us look at the financial aspects. Shareholders receive a right to a share of a company's earnings. Called dividends, they are paid net of basic-rate tax, usually twice a year. You will be sent a cheque for the amount due, though you can normally ask for it to be paid direct to your bank account. You will also receive a dividend

ers concern the communications you are enpayment. To ensure a smooth administration, there has to be a cut-off point. The dividend goes to the person on the company's register of shareholders at a particular date, generally three weeks before the payment is made. Share prices usually fall when they go ex dividend, which is some compensation for the new investor. In The Independent, there is an x against the price of ex dividend shares. The contract note from your stockbroker states if the

shares were purchased ex dividend. Some companies give shareholders the option of taking dividends in shares a "scrip dividend". This is ideal if you are seeking growth as opposed to income. However, do keep a note of their "price" and the date you receive them as you will need this information for capital gains tax calculations when the holding is sold.

All shareholders named on the register are entitled to receive certain documents that the company periodically issues. These include the annual report and accounts and notices about important events such as acquisitions or disposals. It is important to remember that if you hold your shares through a nominee, such as a PEP, only the nominee's name will appear on the register. Therefore, if you want company information, you must check your nominee will send it to you - and it may charge for this service.

Every company must hold an annual general meeting (AGM) once a year. Shareholders whose names are on the register have the right to attend and speak at AGMs. While the vast majority are sedate affairs, some can be quite lively. For example, the attendance of Cedric the Pig at also put forward motions if they can British Gas's AGM in protest at Cedric

Brown's remuneration package. It is not unknown for companies to give sharcholders who attend handouts. For example, Cadbury Schweppes has given chocolates and Hillsdown a bag of groceries. However, even if the AGM is at noon, do not expect a buffet lunch. You will usually be offered a drink, or coffee and biscuits.

The purpose of AGMs is for shareholders to vote on important matters affeeting the company, such as raising more

holders are invited to ask the chairman questions. Those who do not wish to attend may vote by post.

Under company law, shareholders can muster 5 per cent of the company's total voting rights, or 100 shareholders, each with at least £100 worth of shares. Resolutions your portfolio should always prevail. must be submitted no less than six weeks before the meeting. A copy of the resolu-

of their circulation. Increasingly, more companies are giving shareholders perks. For example, there from a hotel chain; a discount on sundry envelope.

UK Equity General PEP

capital by a rights issue or appointing and items purchased from a high street retailer dismissing directors or auditors. Share- or even a modest price reduction on a new home! The rules vary: some companies insist on a minimum level of shares being held, perhaps for a minimum period, while others are happy to give the concession to all.

Of course, no investment decision should be made on the basis of the perks. The normal criteria for selecting shares for

Midland Stockbrokers has compiled a list of tion must be sent to all shareholders - companies are allowed to charge for the cost of categories. It also details the terms of the offers. For a free copy, write to Midland Stockbrokers, Perks Guide, Marketing Department, Mariner House, Pepys Street, London EC3N may be reduced accommodation costs 4DA, enclosing a self-addressed A4 or A5 size

## Gilts come in from the cold



THE JONATHAN DAVIS COLUMN

Some more thoughts this week on the subject of equities versus gilts, prompted by the publication of Barclays Capital's annual gilts-equity survey. As regular readers will know, I have been promoting the attractions of gilts as a sensible home for investment capital for some time, rate of return from shares falls and it is encouraging to find a lot of supportive arguments for this in the Barclays study.

What the survey shows in essence is that gilts, having been for years the pariahs of the investment community, are once more an attractive and sensible proposition for investors.

The main message of the Barclays study remains, as it has been since it was first launched in the mid 1950s, that equities are the best asset class for long-term investors. The data in the study goes back to 1918 and shows, if you are prepared to hold your portfolio of shares for 20 years, you are, in effect, immune from the risk of losing money.

Despite two world Opec and all the rest of the 20th governments. Not only have century's horrors, there has been no 20-year period this century during which you would not have shown a positive real return from holding a broadly based equity portfolio.

At a global level, the Barclays data supports the view that real increases in the capital equities are superior long-term, but the margin of superiority is obviously not so clear-cut.

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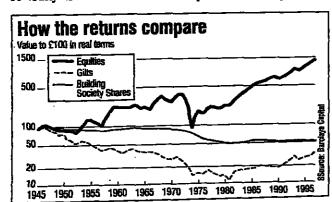
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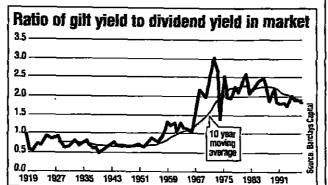
For example, its calculations show that if your transactions costs amount to just 1 per cent of your portfolio's value each year, it can cut the final value of your portfolio by 50 per cent over a long period. For a higherrate taxpayer, the long-run real from 6 to just over 4 per cent per annum.

Gilts are a rather different story. For most of the post-war period, they have been a disaster as an investment class. Inflation is the great enemy of all fixed-interest securities and, with the concomitant high level of interest rates, ruined the value of all types of gilts for many years. Anyone who bought gilts in the 1960s and reinvested the income would have seen the value of their investment roughly halve in real terms by the mid to late-1970s. Since then, however, their

performance has been steadily total rates of return (income plus capital appreciation) been positive for a period of years. but since 1990, with the global fall in real interest rates, we have also had the almost unprecedented experience of seeing value of gilts as well.

As the chart shows, the overall performance of gilts (after





allowing for tax at the basic rate and for the effects of inflation) around 1980. It has not been quite as good as the performance of shares, but it has been way ahead of the performance of the typical building society account (which continues to lose value in real terms for savers who pay tax). The conclusion of Michael

Hughes, the economics adviser at Barclays Capital and the man responsible for its study, is that gilts are once again becoming a sound alternative to equities. Not only are economic fundamentals working in their favour but investors are also starting to benefit from a shift versus equities. That is to say, while shares are highly valued improving, helped by the world- by historical standards, gilts 10 per cent per annum. wide assault on inflation by are not - not surprisingly, since memories of the bad experiences of the past are firmly etched in many investors'

minds. Of course, gilts will remain vulnerable to any sudden inflation shocks. If you think that such a shock is likely, then gilts are probably still not for you. But bear in mind that neither gilt yields nor risk-adjusted gilts returns have yet returned to the level they enjoyed before inflation sent them to the investment doghouse in the 1950s.

Given that equity valuations are so high, Barclays suggests the gilts renaissance is likely to continue for some time. They expect gilts to continue to provide positive real rates of return, ratio between gilt yields and dividend yields) to continue falling. I am confident that their analysis is soundly based.

Of course, equities are riskier and more volatile than has been steadily upward since other types of asset. If you start buying when shares are highly valued (as they are now) you may have to wait longer to reap the rewards, and the returns you can expect will be lower than if you start out when valuations are low. In fact, the Barclays data suggests that when the market's dividend yield is as low as it is now (under 3.5 per cent), the real rate of return on equities you can expect over the next five years is, on average, going to be negative. though over 10 years it will still

be marginally positive. By contrast, when the stock market is yielding over 5 per in the relative valuation of gilts cent, as it was in 1992, precedent suggests the likely five-year real return you can expect is nearly

The lesson from history is clear: long-term investors are generally well rewarded for taking on board the risks of share ownership. This is true even after you have taken into account the things which are often overlooked when investment companies use the Barclays data in their advertisements for equitybased savings products.

What these advertisements forget to mention is that the original data in the survey was prepared to convince pension funds and other investment institutions (who pay no tax) of the merits of equities over bonds. It takes no account of three things that can bear heavily on individual investors: the costs involved in reinvesting dividends every year, and also for the yield ratio (the the impact of personal tax rates, and the charges levied by unit or investment trust management companies (assuming you don't invest directly yourself).

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## Time to invest in a Tessa

Safe but boring, tax-free but inflexible - over the past few years, the verdict of self-styled stock market sophisticates on Tessas has always had a mild ring of contempt to it. But, as lain Morse reports, Government plans to introduce a new Individual Savings Account (ISA) mean the humble Tessa may be about to make a final comeback.

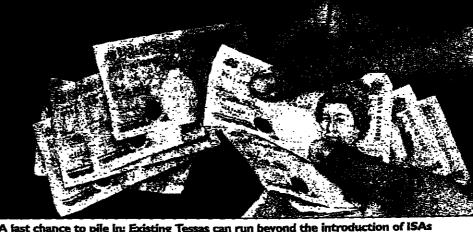
Is it finally time for a Tessa? After all, there can't be too much wrong with a tax-free deposit account. Moreover, although personal equity plans (PEPs) will have to be transferred into the new Individual Savings Account from April 1999, existing Tessas will be allowed to run the balance of their five-year term.

In effect, this minor loophole means savers will be able to shelter part of their cash in a tax-free haven for a few more years. The burning question remains, however, that of which Tessa to choose.

The most common Tessa account) is the straightforward, variable-rate one. This rate may be the same no matter how much you pay in. Midland Bank, for instance, offers a monthly. current flat rate of 7.75 per cent on all Tessa deposits over £100.

Other providers offer stepped interest rates, depending on the amount invested. Pay in the maximum each year -£3,000 in year one and up to £1,800 in subsequent years ~ and you qualify for the highest return. For example, Stafford Railway Building Society starts at 6.5 per cent on amounts up to £3,000, rising to 7.6 per cent on the maximum balance of

The basis on which interest is calculated can also vary. Trust Bank offers a 5 per cent ater Allen Bank pays compound interest - where after five years. According to slightly more risky: they offer



A last chance to pile in: Existing Tessas can run beyond the introduction of ISAs

interest is added on the interest - on a monthly basis. According to Cater Allen, this increases returns, pushing a current variable rate of 6.697 per cent up to around 6.85 per

This basis for interest-rate calculation becomes important you are saving into a Tessa on a monthly basis and, in effect, lending this money interest free to the provider until the next award of interest to your

Also, if rates are falling, say by 0.5 per cent in two successive six-month periods, an annual account will pay interest (tax-exempt special savings for the past year at the lower rate. On an investment of £9,000, this could cost £45 in lost interest in comparison with an account calculating interest

> Some variable-rate Tessas offer bonuses if you leave both invested capital and tax-free interest in the account until maturity. Chelsea Building Society offers 5 per cent of the amount invested in the first year: if you put in £3,000 in the first year, this means a tax-free bonus of £150. Nottingham Building Society offers 0.25 per cent of the maximum

Things become more complicated when the bonus is paid on the interest itself. First bonus on the total interest paid

MoneyFacts, the statistical information provider, a maximum return of £2,359 for fiveyear Tessas maturing this January would have delivered a bonus of £117.95.

How to choose between such offers? At its simplest, if you believe interest rates will rise over the term of your Tessa, a variable-rate account makes sense. If you think rates will fail, fixed-rate accounts are better. Most experts believe rates will drop in the next year, but because fixed-rate Tessas currently pay a lower rate than variable ones, you need to be careful when doing your sums.

The best fixed-rate Tessa is currently available from NatWest Bank, paying a compound rate of 7.45 per cent, but only for deposits of over £6,600.

Then there are escalator Tessas, which pay rising rates of interest over the five-year term. Most ask for a minimum investment of the full £9,000, and the amounts paid tend to start at between 6 and 6.25 per cent in year one, rising to between 7.25 and 9 per cent in year five. Here too care is needed:

averaging out returns over five years shows that these accounts offer no more than an annual return 7 per cent. Unless providers improve their rates. these are to be avoided.

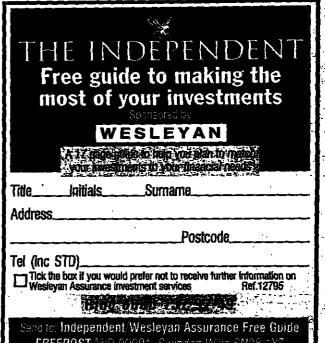
Equity-linked Tessas are

per cent of the value of your first year's investment. Given the current state of the Japanese economy, this is one for enthusiasts.

HSBC links its equity Tessa to the FTSE 100 alone. Alastair Fraser, head of business development at HSBC, argues: "This represents a relatively low risk exposure to equity markets, with absolute capital securityafter all there has been no five year period since 1979 when the index did not rise." This is true, but the Tessa only offers a 1 per cent bonus for each 1 per cent increase in the FTSE 100 - and not until it has risen by at least 20 per cent over its five-year term.

Tessas can be transferred from one provider to another, without loss of tax relief. But, as we have seen, there may be penalties imposed which wipe out any tax saving made on the account.

For example, Northern Rock levies a fixed charge of £30, plus a charge for administrative time spent arranging the transfer. If you had invested £1,000 into its account, receiving £68 gross interest on a variable rate of 6.8 per cent, transfer penalties would leave little gain.



a combination of tax-free

interest with what amounts to

a gamble on the stock market.

Most pay low rates of interest.

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based on the amount by which

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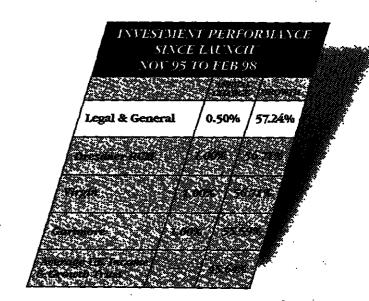
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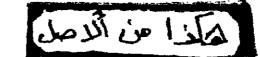
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Question: how does the Government get away with cutting the pay of hundreds of thousands of people without them noticing? Answer: by taking it from a part of their earnings about which they know very little. Andrew Venty explains.

In a surprisingly unnoticed move two weeks ago, the Government indicated it was in effect cutting the pay of half a million people by 0.9 per cent. The cut happened in a now tried-and-tested fashion - by taking it from pensions.

It came in a little-publicised answer, by John Denham, Pensions Minister at the Department of Social Security (DSS), without any public consultation, in a reply to a Parliamentary question on DSS rebates to pension schemes.

A DSS rebate is the amount that goes into a private pension scheme from the government, paid for from every member's national insurance contribution (NIC). It is the part of an employee's pay that goes towards replacing the benefits of the



More pain, less gain: Half a million people have had their pension contributions cut, on average, by over £170 a year

state earnings-related pension scheme (Serps), when staff leave it to join a company

Until last week, members of "group money-purchase pensions", where a person's retir-

For someone on the average wage of £19,115, this would amount to £592 over the year. THE INDÉPENDENT Mr Denham has indicated that from April 1999, this rebate will fall to just 2.2 per cent - or £420. Free guide to In other words, members of these schemes have just been told they will lose an average of

> While members of these schemes will be worse off, holders of personal pensions those vehicles panned by the Treasury for being too expensive - will now receive substantially bigger rebates if they opt out of Serps. Minimum rebates of 3.8 per cent, which increase with age, would give a member on the average wage a pay boost of £726 a

> General or Tesco - received a

minimum rebate worth 3.1 per

cent of earnings.

Within the "pensions priesthood" - those who are paid to study the baroque world of

ement income depends on the questioning why on earth the investment return of their fund Government has done this. - often run by large companies Doug Johnstone, managing such as WH Smith, Legal &

director of actuaries Johnstone Douglas, says: "The rebates are being reduced by one-third at the youngest ages without any satisfactory explanation from the Government as to the reason why. It is a very worrying time for employees who will really need a great deal of explanation and reassurance."

So far, no Government minister has explained the reason for this cut. But the most plausible theory is that it is trying to stop large companies taking advantage of a form of "arbitrage" - switching to the most beneficial option offered within the labyrinthine world of pensions legislation.

Large companies such as Guinness - and possibly up to 70 further companies - have been taking advantage of new laws since the Pensions Act 1995, which came into force last April.

The Act allows the companies to gain a saving worth up to I per cent of their pay-roll - a big temptation for UK pensions - many are any finance director - by which can no longer exist as they are. They must either wind up, or pay much less to their members. Experts also believe Gov-

a small nut? Pension gurus

believe he has also wiped out

thousands of smaller schemes

ernment generosity towards personal pensions stems from a fear that Gordon Brown's July Budget, which took money from personal pensions by abolishing tax credits on dividends, would cause millions to return to Serps. As long as Harriet Harman, the Secretary of State for Social Security, was struggling to lure people into private, "stakeholder" pensions, this might have been upsetting.

Stephen Cameron, a pensions expert at Scottish Equitable, said: "We believe the rebates were increased to avoid a massive return to Serps by personal pension holders."

Peter Murray, chairman of the National Association of Pension Funds, points out that Mr Denham claimed to have taken into account the advice of the Government Actuary. A copy of the Actuary's report to the minister (placed in the House of Commons library) reveals that he was asked to assume that the only group money-purchase pensions were large ones with cheap operating costs. In fact, said the Government Actuary, the majority were small - and needed bigger expenses. But Mr Denham set the rebates as if they were

manipulating the rules as to how

much rebate they should get.

"final salary" pensions -

schemes which guarantee an

income worth up to two-thirds

of a member's salary at retire-

ment. When the government

pays the rebates, it pays less to

cover expenses involved in

running final-salary schemes

than it does to other schemes.

raise the amount he receives in

rebate? By using different rules.

By treating it instead as a group

money-purchase scheme - the

type run by WH Smith - the

company can get much more

government money in rebates. The glittering saving, of 1 per

cent of payroll, benefits not the

members but the company. It

has been estimated that if all

companies followed this route,

the Government could pay out

an extra £1.5bn a year. Easy

money for the companies and

of this game. But has he taken

By cutting the rebate by 0.9

a big loss for the taxpayer.

How can a finance director

Most large companies run

all big, and cheap to run. Mr Murray said: "There is a fundamental inconsistency between the Government's declared policy of supporting occupational pension provision and the policies which the Treasury has been pursuing. We will be pressing the Government to hold a consultation [with interested parties]."

The Independent' has published a Free Guide to Direct Pensions'. The guide, written by this paper's personal finance editor, Nic points to 2.2 per cent, Mr Denham has taken the joy out Cicutti, is sponsored by Eagle Star. It is available free by calling 0800 77 66 66. Or look out for a large sledgehammer to crack the coupon on this page.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE AFFECTED

 Ask your pensions department if you are in a "group money-purchase scheme". Unlike final-salary schemes, your pay at retirement is not guaranteed. It depends on the level of contributions from you and your employer, plus the pension fund's performance.

 Find out whether your employer will increase the amount it pays into the scheme. If it says no, it has in effect cut your wages 0.9 per cent. Ask your employer to make the same contributions into a personal pension. You will get a bigger rebate. But find a cheap personal pension. Ask your union to campaign for an equivalent salary hike.

 Lobby your MP, or ask your union to do so. And write to John Denham, Pensions Minister, at the House of Commons, London.

# Find out why pension plans are not all the same.

Perhaps you think that all pension plans are the same. If you do, then you would be making a big mistake. Here are some of the reasons why you should consider an Equitable Pension Plan.

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# Planning for retirement? Who can you trust with your money?

A retirement lump sum is often the biggest single amount of money people ever have to invest. It is vital for everyone in these circumstances to shop around before entrusting an adviser with their money. Mistakes can easily be made and the time to recover from making the wrong choice is limited, as many older investors have learned to their cost.

In Carr Sheppards' view, what people need in order to start sensible financial planning for retirement is impartial professional advice. As long-established private client stockbrokers, with some £3 billion of individuals' capital entrusted to our care, we are well qualified to help you. Our long experience is encapsulated in our booklet 'Enjoying Life After Work', and many people who have read it have found it most belpful.

Here are just a few of their comments.

ENJOYING LIFE AFTER WORK
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# 8/PERSONAL FINANCE

# Don't be tied to estate agents' advice

Mortgage advisers face a crackdown at the end of April, when a new code of sales conduct takes effect. As Paul Slade reports, among those hit by the code will be estate agency chains owned by the big lenders.

Housebuyers calling at estate agents such as Halifax Property Services or Black Horse have the chance to see a mortgage adviser there and then. But, as sales practice stands, they have little chance of telling whether the adviser they are talking to is, in effect, a salesman for the parent lender, or offering genuine independent advice.

In the case of Halifax Property Services (HPS), as much as 80 per cent of the loans business done by its advisers goes to Halifax itself. Other lenders will get a look-in only if the customer fails to meet Halifax's credit score, or if switching their mortgage would mean incurring redemption penalties.

Each Halifax Property Services branch is given an annual target for the percentage

of loans business its mortgage adviser is expected to deliver to the parent bank.

At the other end of the scale is Skipton Building Society, where advisers in its Connell estate agents chain send less than 10 per cent of business to Skipton.

Genuine independent advisers have long complained that borrowers are left believing they have been given independent advice. lan Darby of John Charcol says: "It gets very confusing for Joe Public. Tve heard tied agents saying they're independent mortgage brokers.

"With the code of practice, you will have to define whether you are operating from a panel of lenders, whether you're operating as the agent of one lender only, or whether you're operating from the whole open market. That's the definition that's going to give lender-owned business a challenge."

Hilary McVitty of Woolwich says the group's own Woolwich Property Services operates a similar system to HPS. "Their initial interview is in terms of Woolwich products only." she says. "Only if they didn't qualify for a Woolwich loan would they move on to something else."

April, all mortgage advisers will be obliged to disclose their true status. Borrowers will be able to phone a central register to see if their own adviser is listed there.

In the case of HPS this means customers will be told: "Our mortgage recommendations are based upon looking at Halifax products first and then, where our assessment of our needs indicate, or you specifically request, we will advise you on the adviser would receive for the sale. mortgage products from a selection of other

This information is delivered both verbally, as soon as the mortgage consultation begins, and later in writing.

Alan Snowball of HPS points out that all HPS branches - and the staff inside are clearly badged with the parent group's name. This, he argues, means people should know what to expect when they come in the door.

But Skipton's David Charlton is not so sure. He says: "Whether the real choice offered is made clear enough at the moment is a debatable point. I think anyone going for a mortgage really has to ask

When the new code takes effect on 30 what relationship that particular estate agency has with the lender."

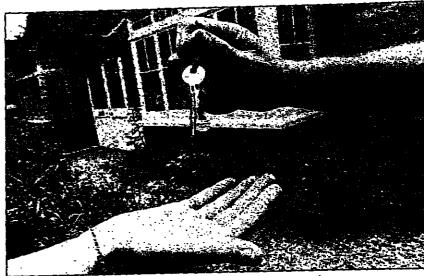
The code will also oblige advisers to disclose whether the fee they will receive for selling whichever loan they recommend is more or less than £250. If more than £250, the exact amount must be disclosed. This measure is intended to give consumers a way of judging whether the advice they are offered has been influenced by the payment

Mortgage lenders have been working to the code since July last year. Lenders representing 98 per cent of the UK mortgage market are pledged to refuse business from

advisers who refuse to join its register.

The National Consumer Council has welcomed the code in principle, but stresses that strict monitoring and compliance will also be needed. Ruth Evans, an NCC director, says: "We want to see mystery shopping and compliance checks become part of the process. Good monitoring and enforcement are the keys to effective consumer protection under a voluntary code like this, but that doesn't come cheap."

For prospective borrowers, the new loan, a mortgage offer "in principle" not are charged at 50p a minute.



Borrowers beware: Estate agents are often linked to lenders

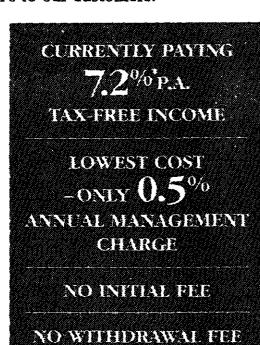
mortgage code is only part of the answer only avoids you being forced to seek a loan to them being able to find the right mortgage. A mortgage which suits you might not the property you want. be available through that lender's estate agency chain. Before an offer is considered ket fully, looking at best buy tables pub-

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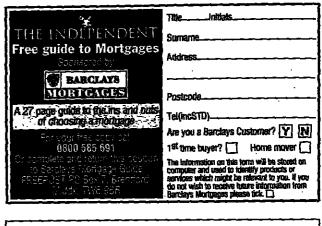
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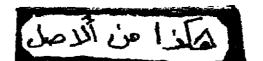
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Shopping isn't what it used to be. instead of popping down the local high street to see the butcher, baker and candlestick maker, we simply do a onestop shop at Tesco. The used car business would rather like it if we did the same. Pile 'em high and sell 'em cheap. lames Ruppert finds out if theory matches reality.

Up to now a lot of so-called used car supermarkets have been disappointing places. Quite often cars are parked tightly together, fresh out of the auction ring, or off the company fleet, under-prepared, scantily warranted and often overpriced.

The supermarket image of quality at a competitive price in a pleasant environment has been an illusion. However, there are now two companies determined to change the way we buy used cars.

The Car Group, and its growing The Car Supermarket chain, after recent acquisitions has become the country's largest single retailer of used cars, operating from huge sites in the Midlands and Wales.

Meanwhile, Carland began operating in January from Lakeside Retail Park in Essex with aims to revolutionise the £23bn UK used car market with a of the difference.

chain of indoor car retail superstores. First stop in our test is Northampton and the Car Supermarket's 10-acre

super-site. Car Supermarket claims to have over 800 nearly new (up to two years old) and not so new (two to five years old) cars permanently in stock. According to the company's chief executive, Peter King: "As with all other areas of supermarket-style retailing.

the public wants to be able to choose from the widest range of goods." Fancy a Ford Mondeo? There are several rows of nearly new examples. The same goes for Vauxhall's competing Vectra. Down the scale there are Ford Escorts and Vauxhall Astras by the dozen, right down to Rover 100s, Nissan Micras and Vauxhall Corsas. Not only is there a big choice, the

cars are cheap: £9,000 buys a 16,000mile 1996 Mondeo 1.8. whereas you could pay £1,000 more at a dealer. Among the prestige cars on offer which, at the time of our visit, included Mercedes and Volvos, a BMW 320i Touring at £20,299 with £4,000 miles on the clock would easily make £22,000 on a BMW forecourt.

The situation should stay that way because the company has recently introduced its Price Pledge. This means that if you can find the same model and specification with a similar mileage, within seven days of purchase and an bour's drive of the Car Supermarket, the company will refund 110 percent



9/MOTORING

Photograph: Keith Dobney Carland: 'an experience for the family

pleasant indoor surroundings.

Like The Car Supermarket, no

sales staff will hassle you, but greeters

will hand you a map. You can interact

with touch-screen terminals to help you

identify and then locate the ears that

be strapped into free pushchairs and

The toilets are spotless, babies can

As for the cars, they are unlocked

so you are free to look around, which

is even easier because they are parked

a sensible distance apart. All the rel-

evant information is on photocopied

specification sheets found in the wind-

The cars come with a 30-day ex-

change or money back guarantee.

There is a 150-point RAC inspection,

one-year warranty, a year's MOT and

screen mounted dispenser.

**Specifications** 

there's the tailgate, which lacks

that otherwise near-universal

modern convenience, a hand-

grip on the inside with which to

pull the tailgate down and shut.

you'll find the Wagon R sur-

prisingly entertaining. Its engine

is but one litre big, but with twin

overhead camshafts and 16

Up to the motorway speed lim-

it the Suzuki is surprisingly live-

ly, very low gearing helping the

engine to rev its little heart out.

but the fire soon fades if you ven-

ture into forbidden speed terri-

tory. Even when worked hard,

though, which is most of the

time, there's surprisingly little

mechanical commotion.

Ignore these irritations, and

suit your budget or requirements.

area. There is a cafe.

Chris Caygill, the company's operations director, says: "Quite simply, we are doing the legwork for the customer. We run exhaustive checks of press advertising and we mystery shop competitors' sites to guarantee our prices are the best and if our research shows the same car is cheaper elsewhere, we adjust the price of all our equivalent

stock the same day." The cars come with a three-month warranty and an AA certificate confirming finance and insurance checks, mileage and previous ownership. Some cars come with two free services and MOT, but you'll have to pay for the road tax.

It's well over an hour's drive from Northampton to Thurrock, so no point in relying on Car Supermarket's Price Pledge. But it wouldn't matter anyway, because Carland are going for the premiumpriced, Marks & Spencer approach to used-car retailing. Consequently the 300 cars are well presented in

prices. This is an all-in, non-negotiable package. Consequently, a Corsa SRi at £7,500 was almost £900 more than a dealer would charge and a Rover 200SLi £500 more.

لمكذا من ألاصل

So why would you expect buyers to visit Carland rather than their local Vauxhall showroom? "I've never heard of someone going to a car dealer for a day out, whereas Carland is an experience for the family", says James Bidwell, marketing director.

You can expect to see more of them, too. Thurrock is the first of 20 projected

Certainly there is a lot that the established motor trade could learn from Carland when it comes to presentation. However, you are paying for the privilege. So if you want a fairly new, low-mileage motor, with plenty of colours and specifications to choose potentially fractious youngsters can be deposited in the Cartoonland Games from at a very competitive price, then it would have to be the lower frills of-

fering from The Car Supermarket. But there is still no substitute for research. The word superstore is no guarantee of good value, and often your local showroom can trounce these huge sites for price and personal service. Even though the future of car retailing is probably the supermarket set-up, the advice is still - shop

Carland, Lakeside, Thurrock, 0800 783 one-year driver's insurance. If you want 3366; The Car Supermarket, Northampyour old car valued, they will even clean it first. But you can't haggle about the ion, 0990 289 227.

### **GAVIN GREEN**

too much time in the oven and Facelifts usually make old, started to melt. vain people look like tightskinned zombies. And their track record at improving the look of cars isn't much

Mid-life facelifting is a long-held car industry ruse to make old cars look new. A nip and tuck here, new lights and a new grille, a few new body colours, add a few hundred quid to the price, market it as "the great new etc etc" or "the new-

look etc etc". Then wait for the punters to flock to the dealers. chequebook in hand, mistakenly believing that they're buying a new model whereas - in fact - they're buying the car equivalent of a middle-aged man squeezed into Brad Pitt's 501s.

All car makers are at it, although it tends to be the mass makers who practise the art most enthusiastically. Usually, a new car has one mid-life facelift, to freshen it up, three or four years after birth, and three or four years before it is eventually pensioned off, to be replaced by an all-new model.

All-new cars usually look fine, because the stylist starts with a clean sheet. It's the old facelifted cars that normally look like motorised Nancy

The latest lovely car, ageing gracefully, to be ruined by the stylist's scalpel is the Mazda MX-5. Born in 1989, it was responsible for the rebirth of the affordable twoseater roadster following Rover's cowardly decision to kill off MG. It was a huge success, tempting Rover quickly to dust off the MG badge and jump back into the market with the MGF. Other car makers followed. The MX-5 still looks fabulous and still sells well although, naturally, it's past its showroom

You can't blame Mazda for wanting to give it a makeover, to stimulate sales. But the trouble is, once you still so progressive - alone. try to "improve" the look of Rover facelifted the Mini in variably ruin it. Which is precisely what Mazda's stylists have just done to the MX-5. Those who have driven it (I terful model alongside). The haven't as yet) tell me that "the new MX-5" is actually better than the old one. It's just a shame it looks like an original MX-5 that's spent far

Most great old cars are ruined when the redesign boys get their hands on them. The first Fiat Uno was a beautifully proportioned small car that won European Car of the Year, and replaced the old Fiat 127 as staple transport of the Italian working classes. The facelisted Uno was an ugly little thing, replete with squared-off nose and tail and ugly new grille and lights. Still with Italy: all Alfas get uglier as they get upgraded. The Spyder, the Sud, the 164-all went from gorgeously homogeneous shapes into lovely shapes spoilt by ugly bits of

plastic grafted on. The first front-wheel-drive Ford Escort, launched in 1980, was easily the prettiest. Subsequent revisions and changes have improved the car but have usually been regressive, none more so than the most recent update, which gave the Escort the Ford-corporate goldfish nose.

And still on Ford, the styling surgeon who facelifted the Scorpio - now nickthe Ford named Frankenstein - should put back on his flippers and goggles and go back to the fish tank whence he came. Scorpio sales have collapsed since that car got its new look. it's a pity because, underneath that giant carp exterior, the Scorpio is actually rather a

good car. The more stylistically aware car makers, of course, leave good design alone, and try to improve their ageing cars in other ways to stimulate sales. Peugeot sensibly reckoned that the 205, one of the best-looking small cars ever, was impossible visually to improve, so concentrated on revising those areas of the car (the steering, the engines, the cabin) that were substandard. The 306 was similarly updated.

Fiat recently improved the Punto but left its shape classic car design, you in- 1969 by squaring off the nose Clubman (although it still built the old, more charac-Clubman looked dreadful and died. The original, subtly altered, still soldiers on, a testament to great, unsullied

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£9,250

# Onwards and upwards with Suzuki

六 As in buildings, so in 🥏 cars. If horizontal space is tight, grow upwards instead. This is not to say that the Suzuki Wagon R+, conceived for Japanese cities but now available here, is a mobile skyscraper. As John Simister writes, it is merely a small car which feels much bigger, thanks to its lofty build.

Space is a psychological thing. The Wagon R's height is not particularly useful unless you are wearing a witch's hat, but it makes you feel surprisingly uncramped when you consider that your car is but a foot and two inches longer than a Mini. Into that space it fits four side doors, and a big tailgate which opens to reveal a boot worthy make a flat load bay, or you can of the name. The nose is short, but it's long enough to contain a proper working model of an

would do for a small truck. So, what's it all about? You might already have seen a Daihatsu Move, a tiny cube on wheels with four full-size seats and sufficient versatility to give it some claim to the mantle of Citroën 2CV reinvented. Well, conceptually, the Wagon R is the same idea made bigger. Instead of tiny, it's merely small. The jokey but ultra-func-

tional squareness, all the rage in Japan, should encourage a light-hearted approach to driving. That my particular test car was bright purple helped in this quest, causing heads to turn from all quarters (schoolchildren, mainly). My daughter, aged 11, described the lurid li bio beadlights, tiny wheels and neo-Mexican upholstery, as "funky". Whatever that means nowadays.

As you might expect there's of it lit at night and the rear considerable cleverness inside. The rear seats fold forward to manipulate them in conjunction with the front seats to create a double bed of sorts. Under the engine. And the door mirrors driver's seat you'll find a pull-



out storage drawer, while the

same area under the passenger

seat houses a plastic shopping

basket-cum-bucket. It's all very

all-activity and multi-purpose.

right in time with the late 1990s.

lack of forethought. You get

storage nets in the front doors,

but no proper pockets. The

switchgear spread about the

desperately dull dashboard is an

ergonomic disgrace, with none

wiper actuated by a button

down near your right knee.

The wiper is either continuously

on or switched off, but what you

really need given the Suzuki's

vertical, spray-attracting tail is

an intermittent setting. Then

But there is some surprising

Price: £7,250 (GA), £8,250 (GL). Engine: 996cc, four cylinders. 16 valves, 65 bhp at 6,500rpm. Transmission: five-speed gearbox, front-wheel drive.

Performance: top speed 87mph, 0-60 in 17sec approx, 42-47mpg.

Citroën Berlingo Multispace: £to be announced. Version of lively, comfortable Berlingo van, with windows

and proper folding seats. Available soon, but bigger and costlier than Suzuki. Daihatsu Move: £7,200. Looks like

shrunken Wagon R, has tiny threecylinder engine. Lots of fun, but only £50 cheaper than Suzuki.

Renault Mégane Scenic 1.6e RN: £12,995. Much more expensive than Wagon R, but a full-size car with a fullsize engine. Five seats, true MPV versatility, excellent value.

minibus. But you can't neces-The high sides act like a sail, so the Wagon R gets blown around in a wind, but it's not re- a huge catalogue of accessories ally a problem because the steering is quick-acting (with the posher GL version's power as- ternal trim (like a Morris Misistance, anyway) and, despite nor Traveller's), spoilers, being taller than it is wide, the graphics, roof boxes, bike car-Suzuki feels quite stable. Try to riers, it's all there if you want round a corner quickly, and the it. Air conditioning and anti-lock skimpy front wheels just start to slither gently outwards. There's the GL gets electric front winno threat of falling over. It dows.

smoothly, too. You sit quite high, your feet working more downwards than forwards on the pedals; this and the vastness of the mirrors heighten the impression that you're driving a truly mini

rides the bumps surprisingly

sarily customise a minibus with as you can the Suzuki. Chrome grilles, alloy wheels, wood ex-

But would you want one? The Wagon R scores high on the Tardis factor, it's a good conversation piece and it's not at all expensive. If you want a mobile phone box, which personally I don't, then this might well be the car for you.

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## Devils for punishment - the serial renovators

Many people have a dream to renovate a property once in their life. Some, however, go on to do it several times. Fiona Brandhorst describes life among the serial renovators.

"We've got the bug," says Katie Swallow, who along with her husband Peter Davies is well on her way to becoming a "serial renovator". Their first project, the conversion of a 1730s farm workers' cottage in a village on the Cambridgeshire/Lincolnshire borders, was completed in a record nine weeks and they moved in on schedule just a week after their first child Sophie was born.

Katie, "but we learnt so much, we were right at the coal face." And it wasn't without its sticky moments. "The JCB we'd hired to dig a trench for water pipes managed to slice its way through the electricity supply to the whole village."

Unfortunately it was the height of the summer - the village pub was heaving for Sun- an early Georgian farmhouse, day lunch and it was men's empty for 18 years. Once they final's day at Wimbledon. It were through the door they "left didn't exactly endear them to the locals.

When they engaged the builders they agreed a total price before work started. Inevitably extra charges were incurred. Their building society, the Woolwich, released the money in two stages, half to buy the property initially and the balance when the job had been

Approaching a lender sympathetic to renovations can help. The Ecology Building Society is dedicated to bringing derelict or dilapidated housing back into use. Providing the property is structurally sound the society may lend up to 80 per cent of its current market. When the builders had finvalue. As renovations are caragainst its improved value.

"We had an agreed list of works to complete before the building society would release the second tranche," says Peter. Which was all important, as the builders needed paying.

Time to come clean: Peter does have the advantage of being a chartered surveyor and he surveyed the property and employed the builders, plumbers and electricians himself. "The builders couldn't blind me with science but I had to be one step ahead of them all the time."

journey to his office in London.

The work continued after us so much money we almost Katie. "We even considered buying a brand new house, we were so fed up." However, with the help of another loan, 18 months later it was complete.

By the time their second child, Archie, was born they had "run out of space", so they sold up. "It was sad to leave," says Katie. "But we knew we were moving on to bigger and better things." This time they rented before buying. "We didn't want to be involved in a chain," said Peter, although it took 18 months to find a house. During this time they spent the weekends driving around the villages of Lincolnshire, "As we renovated we un- Cambridgeshire and Northcovered more problems," says amptonshire seeking out longforgotten old buildings.

Katie turned detective, finding out who owned them by asking at the village shop or petrol station. They bid unsuccessfuliy at auction for an old dairy outbuilding. "The property developers were one step ahead with the cash," says Peter.

Eventually they went to view the estate agent standing" while they charged around the three storeys taking in original features like the barrel-vaulted cellar, the kitchen's Inglenook fireplace, mahogany hand rails and the not-so-period Sixties tiled mantelpieces.

They liked what they saw and the sale was under way in a matter of hours. This time Peter employed a building surveyor to manage the whole project. "This really took the pressure off but we still had to get the utilities connected. There was no water and the builders were due to start work on Monday."

The Grade II listed building also needed electricity and gas. weekends and set about stripping and varnishing. The results

are better than they expected. Wide dark oak floors and an original flagstone floor in the kitchen. "It was covered with concrete and bitumen, so we got down on our hands and knees, chipped it off and then scrubbed it with acid." Every window in the house has its original shutters including the 9fthigh French windows in the dining room. They have tried to This often meant meeting them use wall colours as near to the at the cottage at 6am before Pe- original as possible, choosing

ter made the 100-mile train paints from the National Trust historical range.

Everything has its price. Pethey moved in. "It was costing ter had to sell his prized TR6 when the budget was finally jacked it in after a year," says blown. "We always called it our kitchen on wheels," says Katie, who's a freelance cookery writer and is very serious about her kitchen.

So has their thirst for renovation been quenched? Katie's not sure, "We've still got a lot to do, the garden needs taming. Maybe we'll do it again one day, but not just yet."

Fashion photographer Paul Derrick is about half-way through one of his renovation projects. Last week, he was shooting swimwear in Cape Town, this week he's up to his ankles in brick dust as he strips back the living-room walls of the Victorian home he shares with his wife Jaqui and moggies Rounie and Reggie in south London.

His other project is the conversion of a former tile factory to photographic studio in Borough High Street near Southwark Bridge in London. "They just happened at the same time, says Paul. "I have pangs of guilt when I'm working on the studio that I should be doing the house or even out there getting some more work to pay for it all."

The removal of an illegally built conservatory was a condition of the mortgage and the house needed to be totally gutted, then rewired and central heating installed. "It was so cold we'd just come home and go to bed for warmth," says Paul. It's been a sharp learning curve and Paul and Jaqui are fortunate enough to have friends and family who are willing to share their time and expertise.

"Jaqui's father's incredible," says Paul. "He'll come down from Cheshire and work solidly for two weeks as long as he gets lots of tea. And my brother's a decorator." Projects are completed if and when they have the money - sash windows are being replaced in stages.

ished, the decorators started, bargain price 14 months ago just the money, he can't get out of first on the outside and then the before prices in their corner of the house fast enough. What interior. Katie and Peter sent south London took off. "We're the children to grandparents at not in it to make money; it's going to be our home," says Paul.

> The studio, covering 2,000 sq ft, is a "real wreck". Paul is one of five partners, including two other photographers, and they are doing all the conversion work themselves. "We don't have the funds to pay people to do it for us," says Paul. "Sometimes when I'm ducking and diving between places I think it's never going to end. But it's all an investment for our future."

The Ecology Building Society (0345 697758).



Once bitten... Katie and Peter were not shy of renovating a second time. The kitchen cost Peter his prized TR6

Photograph: Keith Dobney

# A good job I haven't paid you yet

How can that nice bloke who has spent the last few months

transforming your home suddenly become so difficult? Penny Jackson highlights the problems many home owners face as a building job ends, and offers some tips.

Never mind all those caps of tea The house was bought at a and friendly chats; now he has happened to his concern about the wonky tiling, untidy wiring and possible leak in the new conservatory roof? They disappeared down the garden

> path as rapidly as the cheque. The story is familiar. Not the one about the builders from hell, but the ostensibly reliable company that may even have come with a personal recommendation.

Everything goes swimmingly until, shortly before the work is finished, payment is requested. We've only got a couple of days' more work, the lads need paying ..." So you settle up, re-

minding yourself that he isn't a cowboy builder, and anyway he's been really good about feeding the cat and talking football to the kids. Up to that point the work has been satisfactory; you trust him to finish the job to the same standard.

But anyone embarking on home improvements for the first time finds out that the waters can be treacherous. Deborah Brunero can still get upset when she recalls how miserably her loft conversion ended.

To make matters worse. Deborah was pregnant and finding everything a struggle. She says: "We had been scrupulous in paying the agreed instalments, and were very happy with the work. But it all went wrong at the end. The main guy disappeared and we had a mish-mash of people."

"In the last week he came to ask for the final payment of £1,500, saying they would be finished in a few days. I couldn't think of a good reason why not. so I gave it to him. From that moment he lost interest. Even though, among other things, we had serious problems with the plumbing, he wouldn't come

"I found it extremely upsetting, and still do. I trusted him, and treated him as I would expect to be treated myself. It got very unpleasant. I would have recommended him to anyone before that. I wish I'd not paid him until we were completely happy.

It was a hard lesson for the

Bruneros. As is common for a large job, they had agreed to staged payments for the job, paying an initial deposit of 10 per cent, 30 per cent when work started, another 30 per cent on day eight, a pre-plastering payment of 25 per cent, and the final 5 per cent on completion.

The advice from the Office of Fair Trading is that in general a deposit should not be paid to a contractor. Even if it seems fair to pay in advance for specialist materials or fittings. it is better to order the goods yourself and have them deliv-

ered direct to you. The National Consumer Council makes the point that any reputable company should have lines of credit from suppliers, and not ask for money in advance from customers. Since guarantees can be worthless - Deborah Brunero's was

for only five years - there is a good case for keeping back an agreed amount for a reasonable period, which could range from two weeks for decorating work to 12 months for a central heating system.

Another issue that can cause problems when building work has been finalised, is the list of extras. Agree the costs as they arise, advises the OFL One elderly couple were not so endeared to their builder after he billed them for what they thought had been his kindness in tending to an emergency while working in the bouse.

Certainly, all consumer groups recommend that a credit card is used where possible, because of the extra protection it offers. This can also apply to any loans linked to the work.

Of course, all protection goes out of the window if transactions are made in cash for a cheaper job. With "nothing in writing" as its guiding principle, this provides a field day for the unscrupulous. Anyone who does pursue a claim could find it embarrassing to explain in court why there is no documentation, says Gordon Powell, from Westminster Council's trading standards service. A schedule of work and costings is to everyone's advantage; after all, there are plenty of customers who will

find any excuse not to pay what they owe. Emma Perring, who employs builders and decorators regularly through her company Perring Designs, applied the same approach to work on her family home, a barn conversion. "We drew up a detailed

work plan which our builder stuck to well. It's a good way of keeping pace with the work, especially if you are not there to oversee it. You have to take the bull by the horns, and insist on employing someone only on that basis.

*--

In her case, the local reputation of their builder meant that his guarantee was worth the paper it was written on. Everyone has their own way of reducing the chances of a final showdown. One London couple frequently use their second home as a carrot. "A week's holiday in the Lake District if the job is done entirely to our satisfaction. Two if you do some repair work while you are there," It works wonders.

## House-hunting for couch potatoes, or how to get a mouse to do the walking

From Acton to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and from Anguilla to Zimbabwe, sellers and buyers are successfully marketing their homes in cyberspace. For buyers, it means seeing the place without having to go there. For sellers, it means displaying a home without having to show people round. Robert Liebman goes online to observe property being conveyed in bits and bytes.

lan Jones, a British expat based in Belgium, knows a good thing when he sees it: summer in Britain. He also knows a bad one: winter in Britain. Attending to winter first, Mr Jones turned on his computer in his Brussels office and, in deference to his wife's native country, explored Por-

rugal. "My wife and I have a grand plan, which is to spend the dreaded winters in the Algarve and to enjoy our summers in England," says Mr Jones, who is closer to the end than to the beginning of his working life. "That scheme is for retirement, which is still some years away, and I also want a refuge now."

To be appealing, a property would have to keep up with the Joneses' conflicting interests. "I play golf; my wife doesn't. With a country club, I could play golf and she could lie by the pool or play tennis. We also wanted a place where we could walk to buy a loaf of bread, or to the beach."

The Internet was a logical starting-point, especially for a costly and England", says Mr Jones.

time-consuming cross-border property excursion. Mr Jones started with two search engines and applied a simple, basic research method

available to beginners and experts alike: "I used Yahoo and Alta Vista, keyed in the word 'property', and quickly found Portuguese weather and maps and properties. I found a website for the Alto Golf and Country Club and some other places, and ·many of them contained pictures of the various homes and grounds. I was gobsmacked by all the things the Internet gave me."

Although he accessed these websites during his lunch breaks, Mr Jones was able to share the visual delights: "I downloaded the pictures and brought them home for my wife to see. I was able to show her what the apartments looked like."

Before spending a single centavo on petrol, the Joneses had already made considerable progress. "We would have bought anyway, but the Internet gave us a good advance feeling and gave us the sour to go down there," he says. And Alto has sent them maps to help them find their

The Internet also helped them eliminate unappealing properties in advance, "We went from door to door, looking at all sorts of properties. Some of the developments I viewed on the Internet I disliked. That was the end of that - no driving

around, no wasted time looking." They chose a two-bedroom freehold house at the Alto country club, and as soon as they returned to Brussels, an exchange of e-mails between the Joneses and Alto started the ball tolling. Conveyancing turned out to he "easier than buying a house in

its golf course, Alto, which is owned by the British construction firm John Mowlem, left no hole unturned in its virtual marketing programme. "Our web pages contain pictures of the resort, floor plans of villas and apartments and even a diagram and description of each hole on the golf course," explains the managing director, Michael Foundly. The website contains an e-mail link so that virtual visitors can request more information to be sent to them by ordinary

Although he has successfully bought a property, Mr Jones is maintaining his Internet skills: "I may want to let the Portuguese property, and I can do that through the Internet too." Although in no hurry to buy a UK property, he is casually trawling property websites for their summer dream house in the south of England.

When he conducts his UK search in earnest, Mr Jones will find an abundance of relevant websites. British banks, building societies, estate agencies and other property-related organisations are well represented on the World Wide Web. As is common on the Internet generally, many websites are inter-linked. This is especially important for Internet newcomers, who can find many relevant websites from a single fertile source.

One such site is Home to Home. which enables its viewers to receive a mortgage quote, order home insurance, get the gas boiler serviced, and choose among thousands of homes in all areas and in all price

Home-to-Home's Best Buy Mortgage website was prepared by John Charcol, the UK's largest mortgage brokers. Under "mortgage services".

Obviously proud of every inch of the Home to Home site lists more than two dozen other websites, from Abbey National to the Woolwich. Each of these can be accessed by a simple single click on the mouse.

Home-to-Home also contains "a weekly mortgage best-buy page, property comment and analysis containing area profiles and information about schools, communications and local tax bands". Founded by two former Fleet Street journalists, Alan Frame and Neil Mackwood, Home to Home describes itself as an Internet magazine, and lives up to its name with plenty of timely and informative features and news articles.

One notable omission on Hometo-Home is Barclays Bank, whose website features Call Me, a device which enables the viewer to request a telephone call from a live Barclays representative, who phones you immediately or five minutes later. Look no further to discover why property transactions in cyberspace are booming.

**Contacts** 

Alto Golf and Country Club, 2nd floor, Europe House, Bancroft Road, Reigate, Surrey RH2 7RP (01737 222022) (in Portugal, 00 351 82 410820; fax: 00 351 82 410830); website: http://www.altoclub.com Barclays Bank: http://www.bar-

clays.co.uk Home-to-Home, Positive Publishing, 88 Kinsgway, London WC2B 0171 http://www.home-to-home.co.uk

Other property websites http://www.houseweb.co.uk http://www.homehunter.co.uk http://www.property-sight.co.uk http://www.uk-property.com/uk http://www.propertyworld.co.uk

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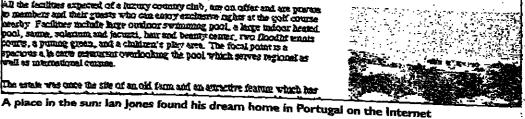
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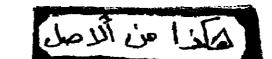
e Alvo Golf and Country Club is stimed on two locations close to the village of Alectic

e country club, encompassing 18 acres of sub-mopical gaillens, indeper and outdoor pools and wancialls, is an idylic site over 10 yes bushbalang views of the bay of Lagos and the Adamic Ocean. Here manufers can indulge in the suphisticism of exaction in also supported into the gamma curricument of the maintainal Algarry.

all the femilians expected of a luxury commy cinb, and on offer and are powers to members and their guests who can energy exchange upon at the golf course beauty Facilities include large outdoor swimming good, a large indoor heard pool, same, solution and jacuati, hair and beauty center, two fibrothy energy course, and a children's play are. The focal point is a specious a la care experient overhooking the pool which serves regional as small as unbreathyral crimms.

The estate was come the site of an old fame and an experienc feature which has







# The day I sold a haunted house ...

Estate agents are no longer allowed to write misleading details about a property, but boy, can they tell a good yarn about the strange sales they have been involved in. In every office, in every high street, the 'nightmare sale' has been immortalised for those who care to hear it. Fiona Brandhorst listens in on some agents' stories.

Gaudy interiors, divorcing vendors, ghostly goings on -all the gory details can be recalled immediately, from the number of the house, to what the vendor had for breakfast on completion day. So, if you're sitting comfortably, I'll begin.

Looks can be deceptive, but when Matt, an estate agent who does not want to give his full name, entered the porch of a house he had been asked to value and saw 12 bottles of rancid milk, long abandoned by the milkman, he had a whiff of what was to come. It wasn't just the smell that bit him as the door was opened. The hallway was practically ankle deep in cigarette butts; food covered with various stages of fungal growth lay strewn over the floor.

"I've got the constitution of

an ox." says Matt, "but I he was a desperate man. retched." Upstairs, the toilet pan was broken and the owner had "peed in a series of buckets" in the bath. Estate agents are not known for their sense of humour, but Matt had to develop one, fast. "I found myself saving things like have nally left the house I had to bin my shoes; the leather soles

The nightmare didn't end there. Shortly after Matt was instructed to sell the property, the owner was found dead of hypothermia inside. It took 18 months to sort out his estate, during which time the house was vandalised. "At least the council came in and furnigated it," says Matt, who eventually sold the house to a builder and got his commission – and presumably a new pair of loafers.

Loathe them or like them, estate agents are said by some to be a breed of their own. But there's nothing like the enthusiasm of a young man with a mission to get things moving. Stephen Smith, from Bushells in south London, places his traumatic tale back in the early Eighties when he was a rookie estate agent, understandably eager to please and keen to sell. When the buyer pulled out of buying a studio flat Mr Smith was selling for an elderly lady,

you decorated lately?' as the everyone's position was. Thirtyvendor was obviously taking six properties and two days my visit seriously. When I fi- later, Mr Smith reached the top

would never have recovered." ing a house for £320,000 (equivalent to around £1m today). With only a little persuasion he agreed to buy the studio. Within 48 hours the paperwork had been completed and a long line of people had smiles on their faces. But not as big as Mr Smith's. Four weeks later he resold the studio for more than £2,000 above its original price, scooping up two lots of commission and, no doubt, a promotion.

We are rarely grateful to estate agents for any effort required to sell our property. So when Jack Cooper, who runs his own agency in Hillingdon, Middlesex, received a letter from the vendor thanking him for his "effort, thoughtfulness and care" he felt vindicated for the unusual approach he had adopted to sell a three-bedroom

"Its major problem was its location. It was rather grand mock

. Tudor semi, smack bang in the

middle of a council estate, and "I wasn't the only one," rewas priced down accordingly. It members Mr Smith. "The venproduced so much interest there were traffic jams in the street as dor was in tears in the office. She was about to lose a cottage people drove past to have a look." The owner couldn't cope next to her sister on the coast. I had to do something." His boss with so many disillusioned viewsuggested he should approach ers, so she turned to Mr Coopthe rest of the chain to see what er for his "individual service". He arranged for several fam-

vendor gathered her children together and went for a long Number 36 was a man sellwalk. "It was less stressful for her, and saved me time. I wouldn't have been able to run my business if I'd shown that many people around at different times." It took a couple of months, but the house was eventually sold. So who was brave enough to sign the contract? "It was someone who already lived in quite a rough area, so to him it was an improvement." And then there's Charles

> and Tim, two agents who also prefer to remain nameless. They were called to value the house of a pensioner who had died. "When we got there, various members of the family were walking around inside picking up ornaments and looking in drawers. We went upstairs to the bedroom to find the bedcovers pulled back to reveal the imprint of a recently removed body. Apparently, the old lady had died that morning." While they were standing there in disbelief, the

grown men leave a house so fast," said Charles.

Spine chillers aside, could estate agents refuse to take on an instruction, and would they have to be careful of giving the vendor the reasons why?

Hugh Dunsmore-Hardy, a former estate agent who is now chief executive of the National ilies to visit in groups, while the Association of Estate Agents, believes it would be "rare and uncommon" for a property to be turned down, unless the agent felt it could be better dealt with by a specialist for that particular type of property, or if he didn't have the right client

> "Honesty is the best policy," he says. "Good agents are well versed in tactfully declining instructions where appropriate", especially when dealing with "overpriced properties and intransigent owners".

One estate agent in Essex almost refused to take on a property, because the vendor wanted to sell it for £65,000 more than she thought it was worth. (Properties on the same estate had recently sold at the lower price of £290,000.) However, with her commission in mind, the agent decided to take the chance. Within three days she had four offers for the asking price of £355,000. "I was amazed – there was no reason for it - but you can never account for sudden demand."

Peter Blades, from Barring-

tons, in south Buckinghamshire, is on the point of revising his nightmare tale. For the fifth time in a year, he's selling the same property. 'It's a lovely house in a good spot, and each time I've had it under offer in 48 hours, for more than the previous ask-

ing price. "Unfortunately, the vendor keeps losing the property he wants to buy, so he keeps withdrawing. Typically, the only time he's found a house he can move into straightaway, it's taken six weeks to get his property under

If you still can't muster up any sympathy for estate agents, spare a thought for Jan, another anonymous negotiator. She was late for an appointment to meet vendors at their vacant property. She found herself stuck behind a small red car going at "around three miles an hour". She flashed her lights, put her hand on the horn and eventually overtook triumphantly, "giving them the V-

She was relieved to find the vendors hadn't yet arrived when she pulled up outside their house. And yes, five minutes later the little red car stopped be-

Bushells (0181-299 1722); Coopers (01895 230103); Barringtons (01753 892100); National Association of Estate Agents (01926



# PENNY JACKSON

## **Hopes of** rental regulation are dashed

Any hopes that the rental sector will be regulated before long were dashed this week when Nick Raynsford, the housing minister, rejected proposals from the industry that it should be

In a letter to Philip Cook, chairman of the Association of Residential Letting Agents, ARLA, he said that the compulsory registration of property would be a huge burden on local authorities, although the Government would stick to its commitment to register houses with multiple occupation.

This is a blow for ARLA and the professional bodies such as the RICS who want to set up their own regulatory body. Of course they could be accused of trying to create a professional cartel, and certainly the last government took the line that it

would cut competition.

Anyone looking for security can of course always find an agent who subscribes to a code of professional conduct. But codes have no teeth, and while good landlords can pick and choose, anyone who has ever tried to find somewhere to rent, in London at least, knows that you get so desperate for attention and service you will end up going anywhere if there's the prospect of a home at the end of it.

And it does seem extraordinary that we should have such a cavalier attitude towards the legal and financial responsibilities of a letting agent - far more onerous than those of selling agents. At least, though, Mr Raynsford will be looking at how the millions of pounds of tenants' money can be better protected. He told Mr Cook that the Government would consider controls over tenants' deposits and clients' funds.

The shortage of family homes in Wandsworth, south-west London, is to be boosted by the building of two Edwardian-style houses in Lyford Road. They have 10ft-high ceilings in the main reception rooms and a conservatory-style family room leads on to a terrace and landscaped garden of about 135ft. Michael Comyn, of John D. Wood, the selling agents, says that this is the first time large houses in keeping with their opulent forebears have been built near Wandsworth Common, The developers of Lyford Villas are Thirlstone Homes, and the guide price for both will be £950,000.

For anyone who would rather not set foot in an estate agency and is not on too tight a budget, they can employ Homesearch London via the Internet to do their walking for them. The company offers a service in finding and negotiating prime residential property for individuals or companies in central London on http://www.homesearch.co.uk or 0171 838 1066.

# It's good to talk - especially when choosing a solicitor

portable TV came on behind

them. "You've never seen two

Although clients technically instruct solicitors, the imbalance in knowledge means that solicitors invariably lead, and clients meekly follow. It needn't be like that. Finding the right solicitor, like finding the right property, often takes considerable time and energy. But, as Robert Liebman finds, this is time and energy usually well spent.

A London homeowner tried to buy a small plot of land at the back of his garden and ended up with a steep solicitor's bill, no addition to his garden, and plenty of questions about the legal profession.

Laurence owned a three-story Edwardian terraced house in Fulham which backed onto a derelict alley that ran the length of the terrace. All of the gardens were small, and when Laurence was offered the chance to purchase his section of alleyway, he eagerly grasped the opportunity to increase his garden by almost

Letters piled up, and his solicitor's fees mounted accordingly, until the solicitor noted a restrictive covenant allowing the seller emergency access through Laurence's property. Laurence wanted no part of it and he withdrew, settling his solicitor's bill, which had run to several hundred pounds. His one regret was that the offending covenant hadn't come to his attention closer to the start of proceedings. Laurence's friend Richard had ob-

served these goings-on, and when he came to buy his own property, he instructed his solicitors to alert him sooner rather than later to tricky covenants. He needn't have bothered.

His solicitors had other surprises up their sleeves, some involving defects of character, others involving difficulties with basic

Richard phoned his solicitor for a progress report on a Friday and was told that his solicitor was in a meeting. His call was not returned, so he phoned on the Monday, only for the receptionist to tell him

that his solicitor had gone on a two-week misseasance and various other seasances. holiday abroad. When he then asked her who in the firm was currently handling his file and what progress had been made over the past few weeks, she replied "no one"

and "none". Delay was not in Richard's interest. He had found a superb property, and he did not want the seller to be tempted to entertain thoughts of other buyers. The news that his file had sat unattended for several weeks had fairly devastated him, and the emotional damage could not be undone when, a few days later, he learned that in fact his file had been handled all along by his solicitor's clerk.

Richard insisted that the file now be handled by the other solicitor in the practice who, as completion neared, told him to write a cheque in an amount that would have meant an underpayment of £1,000. Fortunately, she caught her own error in

Yes, solicitors are entitled to holidays, and

Regarding runaway legal fees, whether for a postage-stamp plot of land or a vast estate, "responsible solicitors always bear in mind the kind of case they are dealing with and maintain a sense of proportion. The solicitor should inform clients if costs start to rise disproportionately," says Tony Miles, a solicitor in the Northampton of-

fices of Howes Percival. "With an inex-

pensive plot, the solicitor could have dispensed with formal contracts and asked for a copy of title straightaway." As for vacationing solicitors, "it's not likely that many clients will ask their solicitor when he is likely to go on holiday, and solicitors may not be able to inform all of their clients. On the other hand, solicitors should notify those clients who might be

affected by the absence," says Mr Miles. "If you are deeply unhappy with a solicitor, disinstruct him. It happens, unfortunately." It can complicate matters, and you shouldn't do it if it harms more than mistakes occur in all professions. But these helps your cause, but you can do it. two firms of solicitors alone cornered a pret-Richard had come to regard his own soty good market in malfeasance, nonfeasance, licitors as adversaries and had seriously

thought of changing midstream. The mer- a step-by-step basis. "This came about as est possibility of still further delay, however, kept him where he was.

Far better than disinstructing a solicitor is finding a good one from the outset, and Mr Miles believes that there is no substitute for meeting with and getting a good feel for your prospective solicitor. The good news is that you can, in effect, audition several solicitors without having to reach into your wallet: "Many solicitors charge little or nothing for a short first interview."

So says a 14-page Law Society brochure, "Working With Your Solicitor," which is as good a starting point as any. In addition to information about fees and other basic information, it discusses and asserts the often overlooked fact that all firms must have and promulgate - a complaints procedure: "The letter your solicitor sent you after your first meeting should give the name of the person at the firm who handles complaints."

Howes Percival provides all of its conveyancing clients with their own guide. "What Happens Next," which clearly, concisely and simply details the procedures on

a result of the quality questionnaire which we also send out to all of our clients," says Mr Miles. "One of our clients filled in the questionnaire and indicated that what he referred to as an 'idiot's guide' would be helpful. So we prepared one."

In Mr Miles' opinion, clients help themselves by being assertive and communicative. "Tell your solicitor your requirements, hopes and intentions for the property. He will then be able to respond. If a client has a complaint or problem and doesn't tell you. it festers. The earlier it can be raised, the sooner and better it can be resolved. And despite their aura of being highly trained professionals, solicitors can and should be challenged,"

A solicitor you can challenge is also likely to be one you can fully communicate with: finding one should be a priority.

Howes Percival, Oxford House, Cliftonville, Northampton NN1 5PN, 01604 230400 (also in Milton Keynes and Norwich); Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London WC24 ISX, 0171 242 1222

# Animal instincts in home-making

## AT HOME: WITH A PET

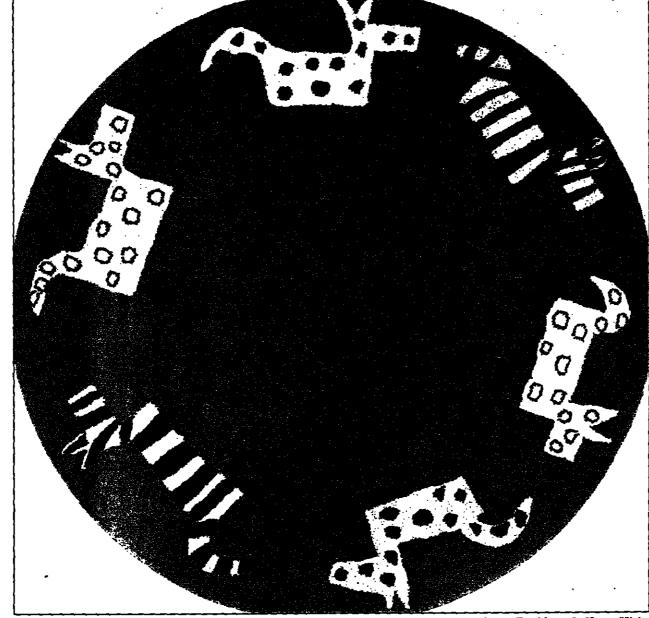
When it comes to deciding which house to buy, it seems the dog has as much of a say as the family. One house-builder claims that three out of four people questioned admit they consider their pets when viewing a new home. They just won't budge without the budgie, or say 'auf weidersehen' without the pet. Rosalind Russell sniffs around the issue.

Despite all the fuss about "green" awareness, hardly anybody bothers to ask questions about environmentally friendly issues when visiting sales offices. What they want to find out is: will the cat like it?

When Crosby Homes was building Symphony Court in the centre of Birmingham, a canalside development with electronically controlled gates. private parking, high-quality kitchens and bathrooms and plush fittings, at least one buyer demanded more. A cat flap was needed to allow access to a patio balcony.

The problem for Crosby's engineers was the French doors leading to the patio: they are double-glazed, and it's too tricky to incorporate a cat flap. Cutting a space in the woodwork would have made it too low - the cat would have bad to learn to limbo-dance. In the end, a core drill was used to fit a tunnel through the 18-in cavity wall and a cat flap was fitted at each end. They called it "Le Cat Tunnel".

Animal passions can run riot in interior design, too,



from zebra, cowhide or leopard print cushions, £18 each from Debenhams to the more cottagey Kitty Cats rug from the mail order firm Orvis. The circular, 36-in-diameter rug, showing a budgie's eye view of six cats sharing a bowl of milk, costs

More sophisticated - and shaken, price £15 each.

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more expensive - is the Skip hand-tufted wool rug, at £460. It shows six abstract dogs on crochet-hook legs perambulating around a 60in diameter, and comes from the design store Purves and Purves, which also sells cow-shaped salt and pepper shakers that moo when

Confused? Lie down and rest your feet on Shaun the Sheep, a 28-in woolly cushion with a pop-eyed stare, sooty black face and black legs, £25 from Boots. And should the dog have his own music collection, The Holding Company sells CD holders shaped like Bonios, at £5.95 each.

David and Kate Hicks Beach were on the point of buying a CD mail-order business when someone else moved in and grabbed it first. "It did sow the seeds of the idea of running a mail-order firm," says David, who had previously worked in

When newly married, he

Animai magica Purves and Purves' Skip doggy rug, in is at the sophisticated end of the market at

and Kate, a classical singer. were keen to find a business they could run together from home. Hence, the Bones Dog & Catalogue was born, run from the couple's converted sawmili near Cirencester, in the Cotswolds.

Three years down the line, they find they have a steady market for cat- and dog-related accessories, from denim dog beds to bone-shaped silver cufflinks (£34, for dog's best friend). One of their best sellers is a Forbes copper collar (£11.75), said to relieve the pain of arthritis for elderly dogs and horses. The black Labrador Caspar, seen modelling the collar in the catalogue, belongs to the novelist Joanna Trollope who was, until recently, a next-door neighbour.

One of the other models. Mustard the Jack Russell seen testing a terrier tunnel in the catalogue - is, sadly, no longer with us. He was run over while out courting. The terrier tunnel, however, at £34.50, has been a huge success. Likewise the crinkle play bag for cats, price £10.99.

David and Kate are preparing a summer brochure. Now they have a 15-month daughter, Lucy, life couldn't be better. "I really appreciate my child," says David. "We have friends who don't see their children all week while they're out at work. They may make a lot more money than me, but we have a wonderful quality of life."

Contacts: Debenhams (0171-408 4444); Orvis (01264 349500); Purves and Purves (0171-580 8223); Boots (0115 950 6111); The Holding Company (0171-352 1600); Bones Dog & Catalogue (01285

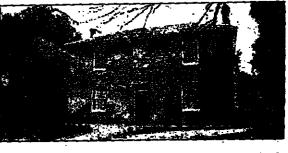
#### THREE TO VIEW: IN THE COTSWOLDS



Orchard Place in Hidcote Boyce, near Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, is a Grade II listed four-bedroom house extensively restored by the owners. It has flagstone floors, mullioned windows, oak-boarded floors, walls and doors and three inglenook fireplaces. There are three rooms in the attic and two above the utility room. There's also a small cottage with planning permission for restoration and extension. Agents Knight Frank are asking £385,000 (01789 297735).



A 16th century former pub-turned-restaurant, The Angel, is a landmark in Burford, a magnet for tourists. Dating from around 1548, it's built of stone, with slate roof and sash windows. Grade II listed, with open stone fireplaces, flagstone floors and beamed ceilings, it has the vital extra anyone needs in this busy town - two parking spaces. It's thought it would convert into a substantial five-bedroom house. Agents FPD Savills are asking £350,000 to £400,000 (01865 726 6000).



Croft Villa is a late Georgian Cotswold stone house in the heart of Broadway, which is lined with similarly attractive period houses. The house is currently divided into two apartments but would convert back into a three reception, five-bedroom home. It has a double garage, pretty gardens and access to the High Street. Knight Frank is asking for offers around £325,000 (01789 297735).

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